

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

A

P O E M,

I N

FOUR BOOKS.

To which is added

SAMSON AGONISTES:

A N D

POEMS upon SEVERAL OCCASIONS,

With a Tractate of EDUCATION,

THE AUTHOR

JOHN MILTON.

L O N D O N :

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PARADISE REGAIN'D.

B O O K I.

I WHO ere while the happy garden sung,
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully try'd
Through all temptation, and the tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And Eden rais'd in the waste wilderness.

Thou Spi'rit who ledst this glorious eremite
Into the desert, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence
By proof th' undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted song else mute,
And bear through highth or depth of nature's bounds
With prosp'rous wing full summ'd, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age,
Worthy t' have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclamer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cry'd
Repentance, and Heav'n's kingdom nigh at hand
To all baptiz'd: to his great baptism flock'd
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd
To the flood Jordan, came as then obscure,
Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptist soon
Descry'd, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
To him his heav'nly office, nor was long
His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd

Heav'n open'd, and in likeness of a dove 30
 The Spi'rit descended, while the Father's voice
 From Heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
 That heard the Adversary, who roving still
 About the world, at that assembly fam'd
 Would not be last, and with the voice divine 35
 Nigh thunder-struck, th' exalted man, to whom
 Such high attest was giv'n, a while survey'd
 With wonder, then with envy fraught and rage
 Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
 To council summons all his mighty peers, 40
 Within thick clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,
 A gloomy consistory; and them amidst
 With looks aghast and sad he thus bespake.
 O ancient Pow'rs of air and this wide world,
 For much more willingly I mention air, 45
 This our old conquest, than remember Hell,
 Our hated habitation; well ye know
 How many ages, as the years of men,
 This universe we have possess'd, and rul'd
 In manner at our will th' affairs of earth, 50
 Since Adam and his facil consort Eve
 Lost Paradise deceiv'd by me, though since
 With dread attending when that fatal wound
 Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
 Upon my head: long the decrees of Heav'n 55
 Delay, for longest time to him is short;
 And now too soon for us the circling hours
 This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
 Must bide the stroke of that long threaten'd wound,
 At least if so we can, and by the head 60
 Broken be not intended all our power
 To be infring'd, our freedom and our being,
 In this fair empire won of earth and air;
 For this ill news I bring, the woman's seed
 Destin'd to this, is late of woman born: 65
 His birth to our just fear gave no small cause,
 But his growth now to youth's full flow'r, displaying
 All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve

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Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
 Before him a great prophet, to proclaim
 His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
 Invites, and in the consecrated stream
 Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so
 Purified to receive him pure, or rather
 To do him honor as their king; all come,
 And he himself among them was baptiz'd,
 Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
 The testimony of Heav'n, that who he is
 Thenceforth the nations may not doubt; I saw
 The prophet do him reverence, on him rising
 Out of the water, Heav'n above the clouds
 Unfold her crystal doors, thence on his head
 A perfect dove descend, what-e'er it meant,
 And out of Heav'n the sovran voice I heard,
 This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd.
 His mother then is mortal, but his sire
 He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven,
 And what will he not do to advance his Son?
 His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
 When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep;
 Who this is we must learn, for man he seems
 In all his lineaments, though in his face
 The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
 Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
 Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
 But must with something sudden be oppos'd,
 Not force, but well couch'd fraud, well woven snares,
 Ere in the head of nations he appear
 Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
 I, when no other durst, sole undertook
 The dismal expedition to find out
 And ruin Adam, and th' exploit perform'd
 Successfully; a calmer voyage now
 Will waite me; and the way found prosp'rous once
 Induces best to hope of like success.
 He ended, and his words impression left
 Of much amazement to th' infernal crew,

PARADISE REGAIN'D. Book I,

Distracted and surpriz'd with deep dismay
 At these sad tidings; but no time was then
 For long indulgence to their fears or grief: 110
 Unanimous they all commit the care
 And management of this main enterprize
 To him their great dictator, whose attempt
 At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
 In Adam's overthrow, and led their march 115
 From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
 Regents and potentates, and kings, yea Gods
 Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
 So to the coast of Jordan he directs
 His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles, 120
 Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,
 This man of men, attested Son of God,
 Temptation and all guile on him to try;
 So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
 To end his reign on earth so long enjoy'd : 125
 But contrary unweeting he fulfill'd
 The purpos'd counsel pre-ordain'd and fix'd
 Of the most High, who in full frequency bright
 Of Angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake.
 Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold, 130
 Thou and all Angels conversant on earth
 With man or mens affairs, how I begin
 To verify that solemn message late,
 On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
 In Galilee, that she should bear a son 135
 Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
 Then toldst her doubting how these things could be
 To her a virgin, that on her should come
 The Holy Ghost, and the pow'r of the Highest
 O'er-shadow her: this man born and now up-grown,
 To show him worthy of his birth divine. 141
 And high prediſtion, henceforth I expose
 To Satan; let him tempt and now assay
 His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
 And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng 145
 Of his apostasy; he might have learnt

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Book I. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

Less overweening, since he fail'd in Job,
 110 Whose constant perseverance overcame
 Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
 He now shall know I can produce a man 150
 Of female seed, far abler to resist
 All his solicitations, and at length
 115 All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell,
 Winning by conquest what the first man lost
 By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean 155
 To exercise him in the wilderness,
 There he shall first lay down the rudiments
 Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
 To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,
 By humiliation and strong sufferance; 160
 His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
 And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
 125 That all the Angels and ethereal Powers,
 They now, and men hereafter may discern,
 From what consummate virtue I have chose 165
 This perfect man, by merit call'd my Son,
 To earn salvation for the sons of men.
 So spake th' eternal Father, and all Heaven
 Admiring stood a space, then into hymns
 Burst forth, and in celestial measures mov'd, 170
 Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
 Sung with the voice, and this the argument.
 135 Victory' and triumph to the Son of God
 Now entering his great duel, not of arms,
 But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles. 175
 The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
 Ventures his filial virtue, though untry'd,
 Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
 141 Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
 Be frustrate all ye stratagems of Hell, 180
 And devilish machinations come to nought.
 So they in Heav'n their odes and vigils tun'd:
 145 Mean while the Son of God, who yet some days
 Lodg'd in Bethabara where John baptiz'd,
 Musing and much revolving in his breast, 185

How best the mighty work he might begin
 Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
 Publish his God-like office now mature,
 One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading,
 And his deep thoughts, the better to converse 190
 With solitude, till far from track of men,
 Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
 He enter'd now the bord'ring desert wild,
 And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
 His holy meditations thus pursu'd. 195

O what a multitude of thoughts at once
 Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
 What from within I feel myself, and hear
 What from without comes often to my ears,
 Ill sorting with my present state compar'd! 200
 When I was yet a child, no childish play
 To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
 Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
 What might be public good; myself I thought
 Born to that end, born to promote all truth, 205
 All righteous things: therefore above my years,
 The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
 Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
 To such perfection, that ere yet my age
 Had measur'd twice six years, at our great feast 210
 I went into the temple, there to hear
 The teachers of our law, and to propose
 What might improve my knowledge or their own;
 And was admir'd by all: yet this not all
 To which my spi'rit aspir'd; victorious deeds 215
 Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts, one while
 To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke,
 Then to subdue and quell o'er all the earth
 Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
 Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd: 220
 Yet held it more humane, more heav'nly first
 By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
 And make persuasion do the work of fear;
 At least to try, and teach the erring soul

Not wilfully mis-doing, but unaware 225
 Missed; the stubborn only to subdue.
 These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving
 By words at times cast forth inly rejoic'd,
 And said to me apart, High are thy thoughts
 O Son, but nourish them and let them soar 230
 To what highth sacred virtue and true worth
 Can raise them, though above example high;
 By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.
 For know, thou art no son of mortal man;
 Though men esteem thee low of parentage, 235
 Thy father is th' eternal King who rules
 All Heav'n and Earth, Angels and Sons of men;
 A messenger from God foretold thy birth
 Conceived in me a virgin, he foretold
 Thou should'st be great and sit on David's throne, 240
 And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
 At thy nativity a glorious quire
 Of Angels in the fields of Bethlehem sung
 To shepherds watching at their folds by night,
 And told them the Messiah now was born 245
 Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
 Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
 For in the inn was left no better room:
 A star, not seen before, in Heav'n appearing
 Guided the wise men thither from the east, 250
 To honor thee with incense, myrrh, and gold,
 By whole bright course led on they found the place,
 Affirming it thy star new grav'n in Heaven,
 By which they knew the king of Israel born.
 Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warn'd 255
 By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake
 Before the altar and the vested priest,
 Like things of thee to all that present stood.
 This having heard, strait I again resolv'd
 The law and prophets, searching what was writ 260
 Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
 Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake
 I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie

Through many a hard assay ev'n to the death,
 Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain, 265
 Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins
 Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
 Yet neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
 The time prefix'd I waited, when behold
 The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard, 270
 Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
 Before Messiah and his way prepare,
 I as all others to his baptism came,
 Which I believ'd was from above; but he
 Strait knew me, and with loudest voice proclam'd
 Me him (for it was shown him so from Heaven)
 Me him whose harbinger he was; and first
 Refus'd on me his baptism to confer,
 As much his greater, and was hardly won:
 But as I rose out of the laving stream, 280
 Heav'n open'd her eternal doors, from whence
 The Spi'rit descended on me like a dove,
 And last the sum of all, my Father's voice,
 Audibly heard from Heav'n, pronounc'd me his,
 Me his beloved Son, in whom alone 285
 He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
 Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
 But openly begin, as best becomes
 Th' authority which I deriv'd from Heaven.
 And now by some strong motion I am led 290
 Into this wilderness, to what intent
 I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;
 For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.
 So spake our Morning Star then in his rise,
 And looking round on every side beheld 295
 A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades;
 The way he came not having mark'd, return
 Was difficult, by human steps untrod;
 And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
 Accompanied of things past and to come 300
 Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend

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Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak, 305
Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in one cave, is not reveal'd;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt
Till those days ended, hunger'd then at last
Among wild beasts: they at his sight grew mild, 310
Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd, his walk
The fiery serpent fled, and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glar'd aloof.
But now an aged man in rural weeds,
Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray ewe,
Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve 316
Against a winter's day when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,
He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd spake. 320
Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In troop or caravan? for single none
Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
His carcass, pin'd with hunger and with drouth. 325
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford
Of Jordan honor'd so, and call'd thee Son
Of God; I saw and heard, for we sometimes 330
Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
To town or village nigh (nighest is far)
Where ought we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happens new; fame also finds us out.
To whom the Son of God. Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek. 336
By miracle he may, reply'd the swain,
What other way I see not, for we here
Live on'tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd
More than the camel, and to drink go far, 340

Men to much misery and hardship born;
 But if thou be the Son of God, command
 That out of these hard stones be made thee bread,
 So shalt thou save thyself and us relieve
 With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste. 345

He ended, and the Son of God reply'd.
 Think'st thou such force in bread? is it not written
 (For I discern thee other than thou seem'st)
 Man lives not by bread only, but each word
 Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed 350
 Our fathers here with Manna? in the mount
 Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank;
 And forty days Elijah without food

Wander'd this barren waste; the same I now:
 Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust, 355
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?

Whom thus answer'd th' Arch-Fiend now un-
 'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate, [disguis'd.
 Who leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt
 Kept not my happy station, but was driven 360
 With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
 Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
 By rigor unconniving, but that oft
 Leaving my dolorous prison I enjoy
 Large liberty to round this globe of earth, 365
 Or range in th' air, nor from the Heav'n of Heav'ns
 Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.

I came among the sons of God, when he
 Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
 To prove him, and illustrate his high worth; 370
 And when to all his Angels he propos'd
 To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
 That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
 I undertook that office, and the tongues
 Of all his flattering prophets glibb'd with lies 375
 To his destruction, as I had in charge,
 For what he bids I do: though I have lost
 Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
 To be belov'd of God, I have not lost

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Book I. PARADISE REGAIN'D. 11

To love, at least contemplate and admire 380
 What I see excellent in good, or fair,
 Or virtuous, I should so have lost all sense.
 What can be then less in me than desire
 To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
 Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent 385
 Thy wisdom, and behold thy Godlike deeds?
 Men generally think me much a foe
 To all mankind: why should I let them to me
 Never did wrong or violence; by them
 I lost not what I lost, rather by them 390
 I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell
 Copartner in these regions of the world,
 If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
 Oft my advice by presages and signs,
 And answers, oracles, portents and dreams, 395
 Whereby they may direct their future life.
 Envy they say excites me, thus to gain
 Companions of my misery and woe.
 At first it may be; but long since with woe
 Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof, 400
 That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
 Nor lightens ought each man's peculiar load.
 Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd:
 This wounds me most (what can it less?) that man,
 Man fall'n shall be restor'd, I never more. 405
 To whom our Saviour sternly thus reply'd.
 Deserv'dly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
 From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
 Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come
 Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns: thou com'st indeed, 410
 As a poor miserable captive thrall
 Comes to the place where he before had sat
 Among the prime in splendor, now depos'd,
 Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shunn'd,
 A spectacle of ruin or of scorn 415
 To all the host of Heav'n: the happy place
 Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
 Rather inflames thy torment, representing

Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
 So never more in Hell than when in Heaven. 420
 But thou art serviceable to Heav'n's King.
 Will thou impute t' obedience what thy fear
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
 What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
 Of righteous Job, then cruelly to' afflict him 425
 With all afflictions? but his patience won.
 The other service was thy chosen task,
 To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
 For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
 Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all oracles 430
 By thee are giv'n, and what confess'd more true
 Among the nations; that hath been thy craft,
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
 But what have been thy answers, what but dark,
 Ambiguous and with double sense deluding, 435
 Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
 And not well understood as good not known?
 Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
 Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct
 To fly or follow what concern'd him most, 440
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
 For God hath justly giv'n the nations up
 To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
 Idolatrous; but when his purpose is
 Among them to declare his providence 445
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
 But from him or his Angels president
 In every province? who themselves disdaining
 T' approach thy temples, give thee in command
 What to the smallest tittle thou shalt say 450
 To thy adorers; thou with trembling fear,
 Or like a fawning parasite obey'st;
 Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
 But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;
 No more shalt thou by oracling abuse 455
 The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceas'd,
 And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice

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Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos or elsewhere,
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
 God hath now sent his living oracle 460
 Into the world to teach his final will,
 And sends his Spi'rit of truth henceforth to dwell
 In pious hearts, an inward oracle
 To all truth requisite for men to know.

So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend, 465
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
 Dissembled, and this answer smooth return'd.

Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
 And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
 But misery hath wrested from me: where 470
 Easily canst thou find one miserable,

And not enforc'd oft-times to part from truth;
 If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
 Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
 But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord; 475

From thee I can and must submit indure
 Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
 Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
 Smooth on the tongue discours'd, pleasing to th'ear,
 And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song; 480

What wonder then if I delight to hear
 Her dictates from thy mouth? most men admire
 Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
 To hear thee when I come (since no man comes)
 And talk at least, though I despair to' attain. 485

Thy Father, who is holy, wise and pure,
 Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
 To tread his sacred courts, and minister
 About his altar, handling holy things,
 Praying or vowing, and vouchsaf'd his voice 490
 To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
 Inspir'd; disdain not such access to me.

To whom our Saviour with unalter'd brow,
 Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,

I bid not or forbid; do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more. 495

He added not; and Satan bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappear'd
Into thin air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her sullen wings to double-shade 500
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couch'd;
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

The End of the First Book.

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 PARADISE REGAIN'D.

B O O K II.

MEAN while the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd

At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
 Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd
 Jesus Messiah Son of God declar'd,
 And on that high authority had believ'd, 5
 And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd, I mean
 Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
 With others though in holy writ not nam'd,
 Now missing him their joy so lately found,
 So lately found, and so abruptly gone, 10
 Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
 And as the days increas'd, increas'd their doubt:
 Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
 And for a time caught up to God, as once
 Moses was in the mount, and missing long; 15
 And the great Thibite, who on fiery wheels
 Rode up to Heav'n, yet once again to come.
 Therefore as those young prophets then with care
 Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
 Nigh to Bethabara; in Jericho 20
 The city' of palms, Aenon, and Salem old,
 Machærus, and each town or city wall'd
 On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
 Or in Peræa; but return'd in vain.
 Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek, 25
 Where winds with reeds and osiers whisp'ring play,
 Plain fishermen, no greater men them call,
 Close in a cottage low together got,
 Their unexpected loss and plaints out breath'd.
 Alas, from what high hope to what relapse 30
 Unlook'd for are we fall'n! our eyes beheld

Messiah certainly now come, so long
 Expected of our fathers; we have heard
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth;
 Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand, 35
 The kingdom shall to Israel be restor'd:
 Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
 Into perplexity and new amaze:
 For whither is he gone, what accident
 Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire 40
 After appearance, and again prolong
 Our expectation? God of Israel,
 Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
 Behold the kings of th' earth how they oppress
 Thy chosen, to what highth their pow'r unjust 45
 They have exalted, and behind them cast
 All fear of thee; arise and vindicate
 Thy glory, free thy people from their yoke.
 But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
 Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him, 50
 By his great Prophet, pointed at and shewn
 In public, and with him we have convers'd;
 Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
 Lay on his providence; he will not fail,
 Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall, 55
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
 Soon we shall see our hope, our joy return.

Thus they out of their complaints new hope resume
 To find whom at the first they found unsought:
 But to his mother Mary, when she saw 60
 Others return'd from baptism, not her son,
 Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
 Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
 Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad,
 O what avails me now that honor high 66
 To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute
 Hail highly favor'd, among women blest!
 While I to sorrows am no less advanc'd,

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And fears as eminent, above the lot 70
 Of other women, by the birth I bore,
 In such a season born when scarce a shed
 Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
 From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
 A manger his; yet soon enforc'd to fly 75
 Thence into Egypt, till the murd'rous king
 Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
 With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem;
 From Egypt home return'd, in Nazareth
 Hath been our dwelling many years; his life 80
 Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
 Little suspicious to any king; but now
 Full grown to man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
 By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
 Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice; 85
 I look'd for some great change; to honor? no,
 But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
 That to the fall and rising he should be
 Of many in Israel; and to a sign
 Spoken against, that through my very soul 90
 A sword shall pierce; this is my favor'd lot,
 My exaltation to afflictions high;
 Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
 I will not argue that, nor will repine.
 But where delays he now? some great intent 95
 Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
 I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
 He could not lose himself; but went about
 His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,
 Since understand; much more his absence now 100
 Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
 But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
 My heart hath been a store-house long of things
 And sayings laid up, portending strange events.
 Thus Mary pond'ring oft, and oft to mind 105
 Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
 Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
 Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling;

The while her son tracing the desert wild,
 Sole but with holiest meditations fed,
 Into himself descended, and at once
 All his great work to come before him set;
 How to begin, how to accomplish best
 His end of being on earth, and mission high:
 For Satan with sly preface to return
 Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
 Up to the middle region of thick air,
 Where all his potentates in council sat;
 There without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
 Solicitous and blank he thus began.

Princes, Heav'n's ancient Sons, ethereal Thrones,
 Demonian Spirits now, from th' element
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
 Pow'rs of fire, air, water, and earth beneath,
 So may we hold our place and these mild seats
 Without new trouble; such an enemy
 Is risen to invade us, who no less
 Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell;
 I, as I undertook, and with the vote
 Consenting in full frequency was impower'd,
 Have found him, view'd him, tasted him, but find
 Far other labor to be undergone
 Than when I dealt with Adam first of Men,
 Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,
 However to this man inferior far;
 If he be man by mother's side at least,
 With more than human gifts from Heav'n adorn'd,
 Perfections absolute, graces divine,
 And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.
 Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence
 Of my success with Eve in Paradise
 Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
 Of like succeeding here; I summon all
 Rather to be in readiness, with hand
 Or counsel to assist; lest I who erst
 Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.

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So spake th' old Serpent, doubting, and from all
 With clamor was assur'd their utmost aid
 At his command; when from amidst them rose
 Belial, the dissoluteſt Spi'rit that fell, 150
 The ſensualleſt, and after Aſmodai
 The fleſhlieſt Incubus, and thus advis'd.

Set women in his eye, and in his walk,
 Among daughters of men the faireſt found;
 Many are in each region paſſing fair 155
 As the noon ſky; more like to Goddeſſes
 Than mortal creatures, graceful and diſcreet,
 Expert in amorous arts, inchanting tongues
 Perſuaſive, virgin majeſty with mild
 And ſweet allay'd, yet terrible t' approach, 160
 Skill'd to retire, and in retiring draw
 Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
 Such object hath the pow'r to ſoft'n and tame
 Severest temper, ſmooth the rugged'ſt brow,
 Enerve, and with voluptuous hope diſſolve, 165
 Draw out with credulous deſire, and lead
 At will the manlieſt, reſoluteſt breaſt,
 As the magnetic hardeſt iron draws.
 Women, when nothing elſe, beguil'd the heart
 Of wiſeſt Solomon, and made him build, 170
 And made him bow to the Gods of his wives.

To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd.
 Belial, in much uneven ſcale thou weigh'ſt
 All others by thyſelf; becauſe of old
 Thou thyſelf doat'dſt on womankind, admiring 175
 Their ſhape, their color, and attractive grace,
 None are, thou think'ſt, but taken with ſuch toys.
 Before the flood thou with thy luſty crew,
 False titled ſons of God, roaming the earth
 Caſt wanton eyes on the daughters of men, 180
 And coupled with them, and begot a race.
 Have we not ſeen, or by relation heard,
 In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'ſt,
 In wood or grove by moſſy fountain ſide,
 In valley or green meadow, to way-lay 185

Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
 Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
 Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
 Too long, then lay'st thy scapes on names ador'd,
 Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan, 190
 Satir, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts
 Delight not all; among the sons of men,
 How many have with a smile made small account
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent? 195
 Remember that Pellean conqueror,
 A youth, how all the beauties of the east
 He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd;
 How he firnam'd of Africa dismiss'd
 In his prime youth the fair Iberian maid. 200
 For Solomon, he liv'd at ease, and full
 Of honor, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
 Higher design than to enjoy his state;
 Thence to the bait of women lay expos'd:
 But he whom we attempt is wiser far 205
 Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
 Made and set wholly on th' accomplishment
 Of greatest things; what woman will you find,
 Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
 On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye 210
 Of fond desire? or should she confident,
 As sitting queen ador'd on beauty's throne,
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt
 T' enamour, as the zone of Venus once
 Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell; 215
 How would one look from his majestic brow
 Seated as on the top of virtue's hill,
 Discount'nance her despis'd, and put to rout
 All her array; her female pride deject,
 Or turn to reverent awe? for beauty stands 220
 In th' admiration only of weak minds
 Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
 Fall flat and shrink into a trivial toy,
 At every sudden slighting quite abash'd:

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Book II: PARADISE REGAIN'D.

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Therefore with manlier objects we must try 225

His constancy, with such as have more show

Of worth, of honor, glory, and popular praise;

Rocks whereon greatest men have ofttest wreck'd;

Or that which only seems to satisfy

Lawful desires of nature, not beyond;

230

And now I know he hungers where no food

Is to be found, in the wide wilderness;

The rest commit to me, I shall let pass

No' advantage, and his strength as oft assay.

He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclame;

Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band

Of Spirits likest to himself in guile

To be at hand, and at his beck appear,

If cause were to unfold some active scene

Of various persons, each to know his part; 240

Then to the desert takes with these his flight;

Where still from shade to shade the Son of God

After forty days fasting had remain'd,

Now hungry first, and to himself thus said.

Where will this end? four timesten days I've pass'd

Wand'ring this woody maze, and human food 246

Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast

To virtue I impute not, or count part

Of what I suffer here; if nature need not,

Or God support nature without repast

250

Though needing, what praise is it to indure?

But now I feel I hunger, which declares

Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God

Can satisfy that need some other way,

Though hunger still remain: so it remain

255

Without this body's wasting, I content me,

And from the sting of famin fear no harm,

Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed

Me hungry more to do my Father's will.

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son 260

Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down

Under the hospitable covert nigh

Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,

And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
 Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet;
 Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood 266
 And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
 Food to Elijah bringing ev'n and morn, [brought:
 Though ravenous, taught t'abstain from what they
 He saw the prophet also how he fled 270
 Into the desert, and how there he slept
 Under a juniper; then how awak'd,
 He found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
 And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,
 And eat the second time after repose, 275
 The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days;
 Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
 Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
 Thus wore out night, and now the herald lark
 Left his ground-nest, high tow'ring to descry, 280
 The morn's approach, and greet her with his song:
 As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
 Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream,
 Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.
 Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd, 285
 From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
 If cottage were in view, sheep-cote or herd;
 But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote none he saw,
 Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
 With chaunt of tuneful birds resounding loud; 290
 Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
 To rest at noon, and enter'd soon the shade
 High roost, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
 That open'd in the midst a woody scene;
 Nature's own work it seem'd (nature taught art) 295
 And to a superstitious eye the haunt
 Of Wood-Gods and Wood-Nymphs; he view'd it
 When suddenly a man before him stood, [round,
 Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
 As one in city, or court, or palace bred, 300
 And with fair speech these words to him address'd.
 With granted leave officious I return,

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But much more wonder that the Son of God
 In this wild solitude so long should bide
 Of all things destitute, and well I know, 305
 Not without hunger. Others of some note,
 As story tells, have trod this wilderness;
 The fugitive bond-woman with her son
 Out-cast Nebaioth, yet found here relief
 By a providing Angel; all the race 310
 Of Israel here had famish'd, had not God
 Rain'd from Heav'n Manna; and that Prophet bold
 Native of Thebez wand'ring here was fed
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
 Of thee these forty days none hath regard, 315
 Forty and more deserted here indeed.

To whom thus Jesus. What conclud'st thou hence?
 They all had need, I as thou seest have none.

How hast thou hunger then? Satan reply'd.
 Tell me if food were now before thee set, 320
 Would'st thou not eat? Thereafter as I like
 The giver, answer'd Jesus. Why should that
 Cause thy refusal? said the subtle Fiend.
 Hast thou not right to all created things?
 Owe not all creatures by just right to thee 325
 Duty and service not to stay till bid,
 But tender all their pow'r? nor mention I
 Meats by the Law unclean, or offer'd first
 To idols; those young Daniel could refuse;
 Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who 330
 Would scruple that, with want oppress'd? Behold
 Nature asham'd, or better to express,
 Troubled that thou should'st hunger, hath purvey'd
 From all the elements her choicest store
 To treat thee as beseems, and as her Lord 335
 With honor, only deign to sit and eat.

He spake no dream, for as his words had end,
 Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld
 In ample space under the broadest shade
 A table richly spread; in regal mode, 340
 With dishes pil'd, and meats of noblest sort

And favor, beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
 In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd,
 Gris-amber-steam'd; all fish from sea or shore,
 Fresher, or purling brook, of shell or fin, 345
 And exquisite name, for which was drain'd
 Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.
 Alas how simple, to these cates compar'd,
 Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!
 And at a stately side-board by the wine! 350
 That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood!
 Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
 Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more
 Under the trees now tripp'd, now solemn stood
 Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades 355
 With fruits and flow'r's from Amalthea's horn,
 And ladies of th' Hesperides, that seem'd
 Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled since
 Of saery damsels met in forest wide
 By knights of Logres; or of Lyones, 360
 Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore:
 And all the while harmonious airs were heard
 Of chiming strings, or charming pipes, and winds
 Of gentlest gale Arabian odors fann'd
 From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells. 365
 Such was the splendor, and the Tempter now
 His invitation earnestly renew'd.

What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
 These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
 Defends the touching of these viands pure; 370
 Their taste no knowledge works at least of evil,
 But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
 Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
 All these are Spi'rits of air, and woods, and springs,
 Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay 375
 Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord:
 What doubt'st thou Son of God? sit down and eat.

To whom thus Jesus temp'rately reply'd.
 Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
 And who withholds my pow'r that right to use? 380

Book II.
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Book II. PARADISE REGAIN'D. 25

Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
 When and where likes me best, I can command?
 I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
 Command a table in this wilderness, 345
 And call swift flights of Angels ministrant
 Array'd in glory on my cup to' attend : 385
 Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find ?
 And with my hunger what hast thou to do ?
 Thy pompous delicacies I contemn, 390
 And count thy specious gifts no gifts but guiles.
 To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent.
 That I have also pow'r to give thou seest,
 If of that pow'r I bring thee voluntary
 What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd, 395
 And rather opportunely in this place
 Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
 Why shouldst thou not accept it ? but I see
 What I can do or offer is suspect ;
 Of these things others quickly will dispose, 400
 Whose pains have earn'd the far fet spoil. With that
 Both table and provision vanish quite
 With sound of harpies wings, and talons heard ;
 Only th' imp'ortune Tempter still remain'd,
 And with these words his temptation pursu'd. 405
 By hunger, that each other creature tames,
 Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd ;
 Thy temperance invincible besides,
 For no allurement yields to appetite,
 And all thy heart is set on high designs, 410
 High actions ; but wherewith to be achiev'd ?
 Great acts require great means of enterprise ;
 Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
 A carpenter thy father known, thyself
 Bred up in poverty and straits at home, 415
 Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit :
 Which way or from what hope dost thou aspire
 To greatness ? whence authority deriv'st ?
 What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,

Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude, 420
 Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
 Money brings honor, friends, conquest, and realms:
 What rais'd Antipater the Edomite,
 And his son Herod plac'd on Juda's throne, 424
 (Thy throne) but gold that got him puissant friends?
 Therefore, if at great things thou would'st arrive,
 Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap,
 Not difficult, if thou hearken to me;
 Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;
 They whom I favor thrive in wealth amain, 430
 While virtue, valor, wisdom sit in want.
 To whom thus Jesus patiently reply'd.
 Yet wealth without these three is impotent
 To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd.
 Witness those ancient empires of the earth, 435
 In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolv'd;
 But men indued with these have oft attain'd
 In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
 Gideon, and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad,
 Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat 440
 So many ages, and shall yet regain
 That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
 Among the Heathen, (for throughout the world
 To me is not unknown what hath been done
 Worthy of memorial) canst thou not remember 445
 Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
 For I esteem those names of men so poor
 Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
 Riches though offer'd from the hand of kings.
 And what in me seems wanting, but that I 450
 May also in this poverty as soon
 Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?
 Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
 The wise man's cumbrance if not snare, more apt
 To slacken virtue, and abate her edge, 455
 Than prompt her to do ought may merit praise.
 What if with like aversion I reject
 Riches and realms; yet not for that a crown,

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Book II. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

27

Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
 Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
 To him who wears the regal diadem, 461
 When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
 For therein stands the office of a king,
 His honor, virtue, merit and chief praise,
 That for the public all this weight he bears. 465
 Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
 Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
 Which every wise and virtuous man attains;
 And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
 Cities of men, or head-strong multitudes, 470
 Subject himself to anarchy within,
 Or lawless passions in him which he serves.
 But to guide nations in the way of truth
 By saving doctrine, and from error lead
 To know, and knowing worship God aright, 475
 Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
 Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
 That other o'er the body only reigns,
 And oft by force, which to a generous mind
 So reigning can be no sincere delight. 480
 Besides to give a kingdom hath been thought
 Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
 Far more magnanimous, than to assume.
 Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
 And for thy reason why they should be sought, 485
 To gain a scepter, oft best better miss'd.

The End of the Second Book,

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

B O O K III.

So spake the Son of God, and Satan stood
A while as mute confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted and convinc'd
Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift;
At length collecting all his serpent wiles, 5
With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts.
I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart 10
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old 15
Infallible: or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require th' array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battel, though against thy few in arms. 20
These God like virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness? wherefore deprive
All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The same and glory, glory the reward 25
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spi'rits, most temper'd pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and pow'rs all but the highest? 30
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe; the son
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held

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Book III. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

29

At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quell'd 35
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd 40
With glory, wept that he had liv'd so long
Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.

To whom our Saviour calmly thus reply'd.
Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect 45
For glory's sake by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The peoples praise, if always praise unmix'd?
And what the people but a herd confus'd,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol [praise?
Things vulgar, and well weigh'd, scarce worth the
They praise, and they admire they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
To live upon their tongues and be their talk, 55
Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise?
His lot who dares be singularly good,
Th' intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
This is true glory and renown, when God 60
Looking on th' earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
To all his Angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises: thus he did to Job, 25
When to extend his fame through Heav'n and Earth,
As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember, 66
He ask'd thee, Hast thou seen my servant Job?
Famous he was in Heav'n, on Earth less known;
Where glory is false glory, attributed 30
To things not glorious, men not worthy' of fame.
They err who count it glorious to subdue 71
By conquest far and wide, to over-run

Large countries, and in field great battels win,
 Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,
 But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and inflave 75
 Peaceable nations, neighb'ring, or remote,
 Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
 Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
 Nothing but ruin wherefoe'er they rove,
 And all the flourishing works of peace destroy, 80
 Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods,
 Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
 Worship't with temple, priest and sacrifice;
 One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
 Till conqu'ror Death discover them scarce men, 85
 Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
 Violent or shameful death their due reward.
 But if there be in glory ought of good,
 It may by means far different be attain'd
 Without ambition, war, or violence; 90
 By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
 By patience, temperance: I mention still
 Him whom thy wrongs with saintly patience borne
 Made famous in a land and times obscure;
 Who names not now with honor patient Job? 95
 Poor Socrates (who next more memorable?)
 By what he taught and suffer'd for so doing,
 For truth's sake suffering death, unjust, lives now
 Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.
 Yet if for fame and glory ought be done, 100
 Ought suffer'd; if young African for fame
 His wasted country freed from Punic rage,
 The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
 Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek, 105
 Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his
 Who sent me', and thereby witness whence I am.
 To whom the Tempter murm'ring thus reply'd.
 Think not so slight of glory; therein least
 Resembling thy great Father; he seeks glory, 110
 And for his glory all things made, all things

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Book III. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

31

Orders and governs; nor content in Heaven
By all his Angels glorify'd, requires
Glory from men, from all men good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption; 115
Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift
Glory' he requires, and glory he receives
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;
From us his foes pronounc'd glory' he exacts. 120

To whom our Saviour servently reply'd,
And reason; since his word all things produc'd,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to show forth his goodness, and impart
His good communicable to every soul 125
Freely; of whom what could he less expect
Than glory' and benediction, that is thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
From them who could return him nothing else,
And not returning that would likeliest render 130
Contempt instead, dishonor, obloquy?

Hard recompense, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence.
But why should man seek glory, who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs 135
But condemnation, ignominy', and shame?
Who for so many benefits receiv'd
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd,
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take 140
That which to God alone of right belongs;
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance.

So spake the Son of God; and here again 145
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin, for he himself
Insatiable of glory had lost all,
Yet of another plea bethought him soon.

Of glory, as thou wilt, said he, so deem, 150

Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass:
 But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
 To sit upon thy father David's throne;
 By mother's side thy father; though thy right
 Be now in pow'rful hands, that will not part 155
 Easily from possession won with arms:
 Judæa now and all the promis'd land,
 Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,
 Obeys Tiberius; nor is always rul'd
 With temp'rate sway; oft have they violated 160
 The temple, oft the law with foul affronts,
 Abominations rather, as did once
 Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain
 Thy right by sitting still or thus retiring?
 So did not Maccabeus: he indeed 165
 Retir'd unto the desert, but with arms;
 And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
 That by strong hand his family obtain'd,
 Tho' priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd,
 With Modin and her suburbs once content. 170
 If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
 And duty; zeal and duty are not slow;
 But on occasion's forelock watchful wait.
 They themselves rather are occasion, best,
 Zeal of thy Father's house, duty to free 175
 Thy country from her Heathen servitude;
 So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
 The prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
 The happier reign the sooner it begins;
 Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?
 To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd.
 All things are best fulfill'd in their due time,
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:
 If of my reign prophetic Writ hath told,
 That it shall never end, so when begin 185
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed,
 He in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
 What if he hath decreed that I shall first
 Be try'd in humble state, and things adverse,

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Book III. PARADISE REGAIN'D. 33

By tribulations, injuries, insults, 190
 Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
 Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
 Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
 What I can suffer, how obey? who best
 Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first 195
 Well hath obey'd; just trial ere I merit
 My exaltation without change or end.
 But what concerns it thee when I begin
 My everlasting kingdom, why art thou
 Solicitous, what moves thy inquisition? 200
 Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
 And my promotion will be thy destruction?
 To whom the Tempter inly rack'd reply'd.
 Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost.
 Of my reception into grace; what worse? 205
 For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
 If there be worse, the expectation more
 Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
 I would be at the worst; worst is my port,
 My harbour and my ultimate repose, 210
 The end I would attain, my final good.
 My error was my error, and my crime
 My crime; whatever for itself condemn'd,
 And will alike be punish'd, whether thou
 Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow 215
 Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,
 From that placid aspect and meek regard,
 Rather than aggravate my evil state,
 Would stand between me and thy Father's ire
 (Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell) 220
 A shelter and a kind of shading cool
 Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
 If I then to the worst that can be haste,
 Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
 Happiest both to thyself and all the world, 225
 That thou who worthiest art should'st be their king?
 Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detain'd
 Of th' enterprise so hazardous and high

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No wonder, for though in thee be united
 What of perfection can in man be found, 230
 Or human nature can receive, consider
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
 At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,
 And once a year Jerusalem, few days 234
 Short sojourn; and what thence could'st thou observe?
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
 Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
 Best school of best experience, quickest insight
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.
 The wisest, unexperienc'd, will be ever 240
 Timorous and loath, with novice modesty,
 (As he who seeking asses found a kingdom)
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous:
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes 245
 The monarchies of th' earth, their pomp and state,
 Sufficient introduction to inform
 Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
 And regal mysteries, that thou may'st know
 How best their opposition to withstand. 250
 With that (such pow'r was giv'n him then) he took
 The Son of God up to a mountain high.
 It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
 A spacious plain out-stretch'd in circuit wide
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd, 255
 Th' one winding, th' other strait, and left between
 Fair champain with less rivers intervein'd,
 Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea:
 Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil and wine; 259
 With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills;
 Huge cities and high tow'r'd, that well might seem
 The seats of mightiest monarchs, and so large
 The prospect was, that here and there was room
 For barren desert fountainless and dry
 To this high mountain top the Tempter brought 265
 Our Saviour, and new train of words began.

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Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
 Forest and field and flood, temples and towers,
 Cut shorter many a league ; here thou behold'st
 Assyria and her empire's ancient bounds, 270
 Araxes and the Caspian lake, thence on
 As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
 And oft beyond ; to south the Persian bay,
 And inaccessible th' Arabian drouth :
 Here Nineveh, of length within her wall 275
 Several days journey, built by Ninus old,
 Of that first golden monarchy the seat,
 And seat of Salmanassar, whose success
 Israel in long captivity still mourns ;
 There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues, 280
 As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
 Judah and all thy father David's house
 Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
 Till Cyrus set them free ; Persepolis
 His city there thou seest, and Baetra there ; 285
 Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
 And Hecatompylos her hundred gates ;
 There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
 The drink of none but kings ; of later fame
 Built by Emathian, or by Parthian hands, 290
 The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
 Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
 Turning with easy eye thou may'st behold.
 All these the Parthian, now some ages past,
 By great Arsaces led, who founded first 295
 That empire, under his dominion holds,
 From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view
 Of his great pow'r ; for now the Parthian king
 In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host 300
 Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
 Have wasted Sogdiana ; to her aid
 He marches now in haste ; see, though from far,
 His thousands, in what martial equipage

They issue forth, steel bows, and shafts their arms 305
 Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
 All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
 See how in warlike muster they appear,
 In rhombs and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.

He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless 310
 The city gates out-pour'd, light armed troops
 In coats of mail and military pride;
 In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
 Prauncing their riders bore, the flow'r and choice
 Of many provinces from bound to bound; 315
 From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
 And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
 Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales,
 From Atropatia and the neighb'ring plains
 Of Adiabene, Media, and the south 320
 Of Susiana, to Ballara's haven.

He saw them in their forms of battel rang'd,
 How quick they wheel'd, and fly'ing behind them
 Sharp fleet of arrowy show'rs against the face [shot
 Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight; 325
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown:
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
 Chariots or elephants indors'd with towers
 Of archers, nor of lab'ring pioneers 330
 A multitude with spades and axes arm'd
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
 Mules after these, camels and dromedaries, 335
 And waggons fraught with utensils of war.
 Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
 When Agrican with all his northern powers
 Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
 The city' of Gallaphrone, from thence to win 340
 The fairest of her sex Angelica
 His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,

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Book III. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

37

Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presum'd, 343
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.

That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark
To what end I have brought thee hither and shown
All this fair sight: thy kingdom though foretold
By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou
Endeavor, as thy father David did,
Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means, 355
Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.

But say thou wert possess'd of David's throne
By free consent of all, none opposit,
Samaritan or Jew; how could'st thou hope
Long to enjoy it quiet and secure, 360

Between two such inclosing enemies
Roman and Parthian? therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own, the Parthian first
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy 365

Thy country', and captive lead away her kings
Antigonus, and old Hyrcanus bound,
Maugre the Roman: it shall be my task
To render thee the Parthian at dispose;
Choose which thou wilt by conquest or by league.

By him thou shalt regain, without him not, 371
That which alone can truly reinstall thee
In David's royal seat, his true successor,
Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes
Whose offspring in his territory yet serve, 375

In Habor, and among the Medes dispers'd;
Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph lost
Thus long from Israel, serving as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt serv'd,
This offer sets before thee to deliver. 380

These if from servitude thou shalt restore
 To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
 Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
 From Egypt to Euphrates and beyond
 Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar not need fear. 385

To whom our Saviour answer'd thus unmov'd.
 Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm,
 And fragil arms, much instrument of war
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
 Before mine eyes thou' hast set; and in my ear 390
 Vented much policy, and projects deep
 Of enemies, of aids, battels and leagues,
 Plausible to the world, to me worth nought.
 Means I must use thou say'st, prediction else
 Will unpredict and fail me of the throne: 395
 My time I told thee (and that time for thee
 Were better farthest off) is not yet come;
 When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
 On my part ought endeavoring, or to need
 Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome 400
 Luggage of war there shown me, argument
 Of human weakness rather than of strength.
 My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes
 I must deliver, if I mean to reign
 David's true heir, and his full scepter sway 405
 To just extent over all Israel's sons;
 But whence to thee this zeal, where was it then
 For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
 When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
 Of numb'ring Israel, which cost the lives 410
 Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
 By three days pestilence? such was thy zeal
 To Israel then, the same that now to me.
 As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
 Who wrought their own captivity, fell off 415
 From God to worship calves, the deities
 Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
 And all th' idolatries of Heathen round,
 Besides their other worse than heath'nish crimes;

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Nor in the land of their captivity
 420 Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
 The God of their forefathers; but so dy'd
 Impenitent, and left a race behind
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
 From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain, 425
 And God with idols in their worship join'd.
 Should I of these the liberty regard,
 Who freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
 Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
 Headlong would follow'; and to their Gods perhaps
 Of Bethel and of Dan? no, let them serve
 Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
 Yet he at length, time to himself best known,
 395 Remembring Abraham, by some wond'rous call
 May bring them back repentant and sincere, 435
 And at their passing cleave th' Assyrian flood,
 While to their native land with joy they haste,
 As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
 400 When to the promis'd land their fathers pass'd;
 To his due time and providence I leave them. 440
 So spake Israel's true king, and to the Fiend
 Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
 So fares it when with truth falsehood contends.

The End of the Third Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

B O O K IV.

PErplex'd and troubled at his bad success
The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve, 5
So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve,
This far his over-match, who self-deceiv'd
And rash, before-hand had no better weigh'd
The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
But as a man who had been matchless held 10
In cunning, over-reach'd where least he thought,
To save his credit, and for very spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time, 15
About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dash'd, th' assault renew,
Vain batt'ry, and in froth or bubbles end; 20
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er though desp'rate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side 25
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long but in breadth not wide,
Wash'd by the southern sea, and on the north
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills,
That screen'd the fruits of th' earth and seats of men
From cold Septentrion blasts, thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With tow'rs and temples proudly elevate

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Book IV. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

On sev'n small hills, with palaces adorn'd, 41
 Porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts, 35
 Statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
 Gardens and groves presented to his eyes,
 Above the highh of mountains interpos'd:
 By what strange parallax or optic skill 40
 Of vision multiply'd through air, or glafs
 Of telescope, were curious to inquire:
 And now the Tempter thus his silence broke.
 The city which thou seest no other deem
 Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth
 So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd 46
 Of nations; there the capitol thou seest
 Above the rest lifting his stately head
 On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
 Impregnable, and there mount Palatine, 50
 Th' imperial palace, compass huge, and high
 The structure, skill of noblest architects,
 With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,
 Turrets and terrases, and glitt'ring spires,
 Many a fair edifice besides, more like 55
 Houses of Gods, (so well I have dispos'd
 My aery microscope) thou may'st behold
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
 Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers
 In cedar, marble, ivory or gold. 60
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
 What conflux issuing forth, or entring in,
 Pretors, proconsuls to their provinces
 Hastning, or on return, in robes of state;
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their pow'r, 65
 Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings;
 Or embassies from regions far remote
 In various habits on the Appian road,
 Or on th' Emilian, some from farthest south,
 Syene', and where the shadow both way falls, 70
 Meroe Nilotic ile, and more to west,
 The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea;
 From th' Asian kings and Parthian among these,

From India and the golden Cherfonesc,
 And utmost Indian ile Taprobane,
 Dusk faces with white filken turbants wreath'd;
 From Gallia, Gades, and the British west,
 Germans and Scythians, and Sarmatians north
 Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.
 All nations now to Rome obedience pay,
 To Rome's great emperor, whose wide domain
 In ample territory, wealth and power,
 Civility of manners, arts and arms,
 And long renown, thou justly may'st prefer
 Before the Parthian; these two thrones except, 8;
 The rest are barb'rous, and scarce worth the fight,
 Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd;
 These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
 The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
 This emp'ror hath no son, and now is old,
 Old and lascivious, and from Rome retir'd
 To Capreæ an island small but strong
 On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy,
 Committing to a wicked favorite
 All public cares, and yet of him suspicious,
 Hated of all, and hating; with what ease,
 Indued with regal virtues as thou art,
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
 Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne 100
 Now made a stye, and in his place ascending
 A victor people free from servile yoke?
 And with my help thou may'st; to me the power
 Is giv'n, and by that right I give it thee.
 Aim therefore at no less than all the world, 105
 Aim at the high'est, without the high'est attain'd.
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
 On David's throne, be prophecy'd what will.
 To whom the Son of God unmov'd reply'd.
 Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show 110
 Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
 More than of arms before, allure mine eye,

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Much less my mind; tho' thou should'st add to tell
 Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
 On citron tables or Atlantic stone, 115
 For I have also heard, perhaps have read)
 Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
 Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
 Cryſtal and myrrhine cups imboſs'd with gems
 And studs of pearl, to me should'st tell who thirst 120
 And hunger ſtill: then embaſſies thou ſhow'st
 From nations far and nigh; what honor that,
 But tedious waſte of time to ſit and hear
 So many hollow complements and lies,
 Outlandiſh flatteries? then proceed'st to talk 125
 Of th' emperor, how eaſily ſubdued,
 How gloriously; I ſhall, thou ſay'st, expel
 A brutiſh monſter: what if I withal
 Expel a Devil who firſt made him ſuch?
 Let his tormenter conſcience find him out; 130
 For him I was not ſent, nor yet to free
 That people victor once, now vile and baſe,
 Deſervedly made vaſſal, who once juſt,
 Frugal, and mild, and temp'rate, conquer'd well, 135
 But govern ill the nations under yoke,
 Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
 By luſt and rapin; firſt ambitious grown
 Of triumph, that inſulting vanity;
 Then cruel, by their ſports to blood inur'd
 Of fighting beaſts, and men to beaſts expos'd, 140
 Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier ſtill,
 And from the daily ſcene effeminate.
 What wiſe and valiant man would ſeek to free
 Theſe thus degenerate, by themſelves inſlav'd,
 Or could of inward ſlaves make outward free? 145
 Know therefore when my ſeaſon comes to ſit
 On David's throne, it ſhall be like a tree
 Spreading and overſhadowing all the earth,
 Or as a ſtone that ſhall to pieces daſh
 All monarchies beſides throughout the world, 150
 And of my kingdom there ſhall be no end;

Means there shall be to this, but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.

To whom the Tempter impudent reply'd.
I see all offers made by me how slight 155
Thou valuest, because offer'd, and reject'st:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:
On th' other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem, 160
Nor what I part with mean to give for nought;
All these which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world to thee I give;
For giv'n to me, I give to whom I please,
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else, 165
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior lord,
Easily done, and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?

Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain.
I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less, 171
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
Th' abominable terms, impious condition;
But I indure the time, till which expir'd,
Thou hast permission on me. It is written 175
The first of all commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accurs'd, now more accurs'd
For this attempt bolder than that on Eve, 180
And more blasphemous? which expect to rue.
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given,
Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd;
Other donation none thou canst produce:
If giv'n, by whom but by the king of kings, 185
God over all supreme? if giv'n to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid? But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me the Son of God, 190

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Book IV. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

45

To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God?
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
That evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.

To whom the Fiend with fear abash'd reply'd.
Be not so fore offended, Son of God, 196

Though sons of God both Angels are and Men,
If I to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd

What both from Men and Angels I receive, 200

Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth
Nations besides from all the quarter'd winds,
God of this world invok'd and world beneath;

Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me so fatal, me it most concerns. 205

The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,

Rather more honor left and more esteem;

Me nought advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.

Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,

The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more 210

Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not.

And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclin'd

Than to a worldly crown, addicted more

To contemplation and profound dispute,

As by that early action may be judg'd, 215

When slipping from thy mother's eye thou went'st

Alone into the temple; there wast found

Among the gravest Rabbies disputant

On points and questions sitting Moses chair,

Teaching not taught; the childhood shows the man,

As morning shows the day. Be famous then 221

By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,

So let extend thy mind o'er all the world

In knowledge, all things in it comprehend:

All knowledge is not couch'd in Moses Law, 225

The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;

The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach

To admiration, led by nature's light;

And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,

Ruling them by persuasion as thou mean'st; 230
 Without their learning how wilt thou with them,
 Or they with thee hold conversation meet?
 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
 Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
 Error by his own arms is best evinc'd. 235
 Look once more ere we leave this specular mount
 Westward, much nearer by south-west, behold
 Where on the Ægean shore a city stands
 Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,
 Athens the eye of Greece, mother of arts 240
 And eloquence, native to famous wits
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
 City' or suburban, studious walks and shades;
 See there the olive-grove of Academe,
 Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird 245
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
 There flow'ry hill Hymettus with the sound
 Of bees industrious murmur oft invites
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
 His whisp'ring stream: within the walls then view
 The schools of ancient sages; his who bred 251
 Great Alexander to subdue the world,
 Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
 There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power
 Of harmony in tones and numbers hit 255
 By voice or hand, and various-measur'd verse,
 Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
 Blind Melesigenes thence Homer call'd,
 Whose poem Phœbus challeng'd for his own. 260
 Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
 In Chorus or Iambic, teachers best
 Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life; 265
 High actions, and high passions best describing:
 Thence to the famous orators repair,
 Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence

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Wielded at will that fierce democratic,

Shook th' arsenal and fulmin'd over Greece, 270

To Macedon and Artaxerxes throne :

To sage philosophy next lend thine ear,

From Heav'n descended to the low-rooft house

Of Socrates; see there his tenement,

Whom well inspir'd the oracle pronounc'd 275

Wiseſt of men; from whose mouth iſſued forth

Mellifluous ſtreams that water'd all the ſchools

Of Academics old and new, with thoſe

Sinnam'd Peripatetics, and the ſect

Epicurean, and the Stoic ſevere; 280

Theſe here revolve, or, as thou lik'ſt, at home,

Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;

Theſe rules will render thee a king complete

Within thyſelf, much more with empire join'd.

To whom our Saviour ſagely thus reply'd. 285

Think not but that I know theſe things, or think

I know them not; not therefore am I ſhort

Of knowing what I ought: he who receives

Light from above, from the fountain of light,

No other doctrin needs, though granted true; 290

But theſe are falſe, or little elſe but dreams,

Conjeſtures, fancies, built on nothing firm.

The firſt and wiſeſt of them all profeſs'd

To know this only, that he nothing knew;

The next to fabling fell and ſmooth conceits; 295

A third ſort doubted all things, though plain ſenſe,

Others in virtue plac'd felicity,

But virtue join'd with riches and long life;

In corporal pleaſure he, and careleſs eaſe;

The Stoic laſt in philoſophic pride, 300

By him call'd virtue; and his virtuous man,

Wiſe, perfect in himſelf, and all poſſeſſing,

Equals to God, oft ſhames not to prefer,

As fearing God nor man, contemning all

Wealth, pleaſure, pain or torment, death and life, 305

Which when he liſts, he leaves, or boaiſts he can,

For all his tedious talk is but vain boaiſt,

Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
 Alas what can they teach, and not mislead,
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more, 310
 And how the world began, and how man fell
 Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
 Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
 And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
 All glory arrogate, to God give none, 315
 Rather accuse him under usual names,
 Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
 Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
 True wisdom, finds her not, or by delusion
 Far worse, her false resemblance only meets, 320
 An empty cloud. However many books,
 Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
 Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
 A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
 (And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?)
 Uncertain and unsettled still remains, 326
 Deep vers'd in books and shallow in himself,
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
 As children gathering pebbles on the shore. 330
 Or if I would delight my private hours
 With music or with poem, where so soon
 As in our native language can I find
 That solace? All our law and story strow'd
 With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscrib'd,
 Our Hebrew songs and harps in Babylon, 336
 That pleas'd so well our victor's ear, declare
 That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd;
 Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
 The vices of their Deities, and their own 340
 In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
 Their Gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
 Remove their swelling epithets thick laid
 As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
 Thin sown with ought of profit or delight, 345
 Will far be found unworthy to compare

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49

With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excell'g,
 Where God is prais'd aright, and God-like men,
 The Holiest of Holies, and his Saints;
 Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee,
 Unless where moral virtue is express'd 351
 By light of nature not in all quite lost.
 Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
 The top of eloquence, statists indeed,
 And lovers of their country, as may seem; 355
 But herein to our prophets far beneath,
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching
 The solid rules of civil government
 In their majestic unaffected stile
 Than all the' oratory of Greece and Rome. 360
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
 What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,
 What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;
 These only with our law best form a king.
 So spake the Son of God; but Satan now 365
 Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent,
 Thus to our Saviour with stern brow reply'd.
 Since neither wealth, nor honor, arms nor arts,
 Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor ought
 By me propos'd in life contemplative, 370
 Or active, tended on by glory, or fame,
 What dost thou in this world? the wilderness
 For thee is fittest place; I found thee there,
 And thither will return thee; yet remember
 What I foretel thee, soon thou shalt have cause 375
 To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
 Nicely or cautiously my offer'd aid,
 Which would have set thee in short time with ease
 On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season, 380
 When prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
 Now contrary, if I read ought in Heaven,
 Or Heav'n write ought of fate, by what the stars
 Voluminous, or single characters,
 In their conjunction met, give me to spell, 385

Sorrows, and labors, opposition, hate
 Attends thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
 Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death;
 A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
 Real or allegoric, I discern not, 390
 Nor when, eternal sure, as without end,
 Without beginning; for no date prefix'd
 Directs me in the starry rubric set.

So saying he took (for still he knew his power
 Not yet expir'd) and to the wilderness 395
 Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
 Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
 As day-light sunk, and brought in louring night
 Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,
 Privation mere of light and absent day. 400
 Our Saviour meek and with untroubled mind
 After his aery jaunt, though hurried fore,
 Hungry and cold betook him to his rest,
 Wherever, under some concourse of shades, 404
 Whose branching arms thick interwin'd might shield
 From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head,
 But shelter'd slept in vain, for at his head
 The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
 Disturb'd his sleep; and either tropic now 409
 'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heav'n, the clouds
 From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
 Pierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire
 In ruin reconcil'd: nor slept the winds
 Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
 From the four hinges of the world, and fell 415
 On the vex'd wilderness, whose tallest pines,
 Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks
 Bow'd their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
 Or torn up sheer: ill wast thou shrouded then,
 O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st 420
 Unshaken; nor yet stay'd the terror there,
 Infernal ghosts, and hellish furies, round [shriek'd,
 Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some
 Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou

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Book IV. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

51

Sat'ft unappall'd in calm and finlefs peace. 425
 Thus pafs'd the night fo foul, till morning fair
 Came forth with pilgrim steps in amice gray,
 Who with her radiant finger ftill'd the roar
 Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
 And grifly fpectres, which the Fiend had rais'd 430
 To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
 And now the fun with more effectual beams
 Had chear'd the face of earth, and dry'd the wet
 From-drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
 After a night of ftorm fo ruinous,
 Clear'd up their choicelt notes in bufh and fpray
 To gratulate the fweet return of morn;
 Nor yet amidft this joy and brightelt morn
 Was abfent, after all his mifchief done, 440
 The prince of darknefs, glad would alfo feem
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came,
 Yet with no new device, they all were fpent,
 Rather by this his laft affront refolv'd,
 Desp'rate of better courfe, to vent his rage, 445
 And mad despite to be fo oft repell'd.
 Him walking on a funny hill he found,
 Back'd on the north and weft by a thick wood;
 Out of the wood he ftarts in wonted fhape,
 And in a carelefs mood thus to him faid: 450
 Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
 After a difmal night; I heard the wrack
 As earth and fky would mingle; but myfelf
 Was diftant; and thefe flaws, tho' mortals fear them
 As dang'rous to the pillar'd frame of Heaven, 455
 Or to the earth's dark bafis underneath,
 Are to the main as inconfiderable,
 And harmlefs, if not wholfome, as a sneeze
 To man's lefs univerfe, and foon are gone;
 Yet as being oft times noxious where they light 460
 On man, beaft, plant, wafteful and turbulent,
 Like turbulencies in th' affairs of men,
 Over whofe heads they roar, and feem to point,

They oft fore-signify and threaten ill :
 This tempest at this desert most was bent ; 465
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
 The perfect season offer'd with my aid
 To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
 All to the push of fate, pursue thy way 470
 Of gaining David's throne no man knows when,
 For both the when and how is no where told,
 Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt ;
 For Angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
 The time and means : each act is rightliest done, 475
 Not when it must, but when it may be best.
 If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
 What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
 Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
 Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold ; 480
 Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,
 So many terrors, voices, prodigies
 May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign.

So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
 And stay'd not, but in brief him answer'd thus : 485

Me worse than wet thou find'st not ; other harm
 Those terrors which thou speak'st of, did me none ;
 I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
 And threatning nigh ; what they can do as signs
 Betokening, or ill-boding, I condemn 490
 As false portents, not sent from God, but thee ;
 Who knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
 Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I accepting
 At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
 Ambitious Spirit, and wouldst be thought my God,
 And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrify
 Me to thy will ; desist, thou art discern'd
 And toil'st in vain, nor me in vain molest.

To whom the Fiend, now swoln with rage, reply'd.
 Then hear, O Son of David, Virgin-born ; 500
 For Son of God to me is yet to me in doubt :
 Of the Messiah I have heard foretold

Book IV. PARADISE REGAIN'D.

53

By all the Prophets ; of thy birth at length
 Announc'd by Gabriel with the first I knew,
 And of th' angelic song in Bethlehem field, 505
 On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.
 From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
 Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
 Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred ;
 Till at the ford of Jordan whither all 510
 Flock'd to the Baptist, I among the rest,
 Though not to be baptiz'd, by voice from Heaven
 Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God below'd.
 Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
 And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn 515
 In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
 The Son of God, which bears no single sense ;
 The Son of God I also am, or was,
 And if I was, I am ; relation stands ;
 All men are Sons of God ; yet thee I thought 520
 In some respect far higher so declar'd.
 Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour
 And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild ;
 Where by all best conjectures I collect
 Thou art to be my fatal enemy. 525
 Good reason then, if I before-hand seek
 To understand my adversary, who
 And what he is ; his wisdom, pow'r, intent ;
 By parl, or composition, truce, or league
 To win him, or win from him what I can. 530
 And opportunity I here have had
 To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
 Proof against all temptation, as a rock
 Of adamant, and as a center, firm,
 To th' utmost of mere man both wise and good, 535
 Not more ; for honors, riches, kingdoms, glory
 Have been before contemn'd, and may again :
 Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
 Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heaven
 Another method I must now begin. 540

So say'ing he caught him up, and without wing
 Of hippogrif bore through the air sublime
 Over the wilderness and o'er the plain ;
 Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
 The holy city lifted high her towers, 545
 And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
 Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
 Of alabaster, topt with golden spires :
 There on the highest pinnacle he set
 The Son of God, and added thus in scorn. 550

There stand, if thou wilt stand ; to stand upright
 Will ask thee skill ; I to thy Father's house
 Have brought thee', and highest plac'd, highest is best,
 Now show thy progeny ; if not to stand,
 Cast thyself down ; safely, if Son of God : 555
 For it is written, He will give command
 Concerning thee to his Angels, in their hands
 They shall up lift thee, lest at any time
 Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.

To whom thus Jesus ; Also it is written, 560
 Tempt not the Lord thy God : he said and stood :
 But Satan smitten with amazement fell.
 As when earth's son Antæus (to compare
 Small things with greatest) in Itrassia strove
 With Jove's Alcides, and oft foil'd still rose, 565
 Receiving from his mother earth new strength,
 Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,
 Throttled at length in th' air, expir'd and fell ;
 So after many a foil the Tempter proud,
 Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride 570
 Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall.

And as that Theban monster that propos'd,
 Her riddle', and him, who solv'd it not, devour'd,
 That once found out, and solv'd, for grief and spite
 Cast herself headlong from th' Ismenian steep ; 575
 So struck with dread and anguish fell the Fiend,
 And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
 Joyless triumphals of his hop'd success,
 Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,

Book IV. PARADISE REGAIN'D. 55
 Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God. 580
 So Satan fell; and strait a fiery globe
 Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
 Who on their plumy vans receiv'd him soft
 From his uneasy station, and upbore
 As on a floating couch through the blithe air, 585
 Then in a flow'ry valley set him down
 On a green bank, and set before him spread
 A table of celestial food, divine,
 Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
 And from the fount of life ambrosial drink, 590
 That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd,
 What hunger, if ought hunger had impair'd,
 Or thirst; and as he fed, angelic quires
 Sung heav'nly anthems of his victory
 Over temptation, and the Tempter proud. 595
 True Image of the Father, whether thron'd
 In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
 Conceiving, or remote from Heav'n, in brin'
 In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
 Wand'ring the wilderness, whatever place, 600
 Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
 The Son of God, with God-like force indued
 Against th' attempter of thy Father's throne,
 And thief of Paradise; him long of old
 Thou didst debel, and down from Heaven cast 605
 With all his army, now thou hast aveng'd
 Supplanted Adam, and by vanquishing
 Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
 And frustrated the conquest fraudulent:
 He never more henceforth will dare set foot 610
 In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
 For though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
 A fairer Paradise is founded now
 For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou
 A Saviour art come down to re-install 615
 Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
 Of Tempter and temptation without fear.
 But thou, infernal Serpent, shalt not long

Rule in the clouds ; like an autumnal star
Or lightning thou shalt fall from Heav'n, trod down
Under his feet : for proof, ere this thou feel'st
Thy wound, yet not thy last and deadliest wound,
By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell
No triumph, in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt ; her after learn with awe 625
To dread the Son of God : he all unarm'd,
Shall chace thee with the terror of his voice
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy legions ; yelling they shall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine, 630
Lest he command them down into the deep
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.
Hail Son of the most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to save mankind. 635
Thus they the Son of God our Saviour meek
Sung victor, and from heav'nly feast refresh'd
Frought on his way with joy ; he unobserv'd
Home to his mother's house private return'd.

THE END.

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CS

Of that Sort of Dramatic Poem which
is call'd Tragedy.

TRAGEDY, as it was anciently compos'd, hath been ever held the graveſt, moraleſt, and moſt profitable of all other poems : therefore ſaid by Aristotle to be of power by raiſing pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of thoſe and ſuch like paſſions, that is, to temper and reduce them to juſt meaſure with a kind of delight, ſtirred up by reading or ſeeing thoſe paſſions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his aſſertion: for ſo in phyſic things of melancholic hue and quality are uſed againſt melancholy, ſour againſt ſour, ſalt to remove ſalt humors. Hence philoſophers, and other graveſt writers, as Cicero, Plutarch, and others, frequently cite out of tragic poets, both to adorn and illuſtrate their diſcourſe. The Apoſtle Paul himſelf thought it not unworthy to inſert a verſe of Euripides into the text of Holy Scripture, 1. Cor. XV. 33, and Paræus commenting on the Revelation, divides the whole book as a Tragedy, into acts diſtinguiſhed each by a chorus of heavenly harpings and ſong between. Heretofore men in hiſheſt dignity have labor'd not a little to be thought able to compoſe a tragedy. Of that honor Dionyſius the elder was no leſs ambitious than before of his attaining to the tyranny. Auguſtus Cæſar alſo had began his Ajax, but unab'le to pleaſe his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfiniſhed. Seneca the philoſopher is by ſome thought the author of thoſe tragedies (at leaſt the beſt of them) that go under that name. Gregory Nazianzen a Father of the Church, thought it not unbecom-
ſeeming

seeming the sanctity of his person to write a tragedy, which is entitled *Christ suffering*. This is mentioned to vindicate tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common interludes; hap'ning through the poets error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath been counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people. And though ancient tragedy use no prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self-defense, or explanation, that which Martial calls an epistle; in behalf of this tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much before-hand may be epistl'd; that chorus is here introduc'd after the Greek manner, not ancient only but modern, and still in use among the Italians. In the modeling therefore of this poem, with good reason, the ancients and Italians are rather follow'd, as of much more authority and fame. The measure of verse us'd in the chorus is of all sorts, called by the Greeks Monostrophic, or rather Apolelymenon, without regard had to Strophe, Antistrophe or Epod, which were a kind of stanza's fram'd only for the music, then us'd with the chorus that sung; not essential to the poem, and therefore not material; or being divided into stanza's or pauses, they may be called Allæostropha. Division into act and scene referring chiefly to the stage (to which this work never was intended) is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole drama be found not produc'd beyond the fifth act. Of the stile and uniformity, and that commonly call'd the plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing indeed but such œconomy, or disposition of the fable as may stand best with versimilitude and decorum; they

only will best judge who are not unacquainted with Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the three tragic poets unequal'd yet by any, and the best rule to all who endeavor to write tragedy. The circumscription of time, wherein the whole drama begins and ends, is according to ancient rule, and best example, within the space of 24 hours.

THE ARGUMENT.

Samson, made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labor as in a common work-house, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labor, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retir'd, there to sit a while, and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can, then by his old father Manoah, who endeavors the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclam'd by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavor with the Philistian lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons; and lastly by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength

in

THE ARGUMENT. 61

in their presence ; he at first refuses, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come ; at length persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him : the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his son's deliverance : in the midst of which discourse an Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterward more distinctly relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself ; wherewith the tragedy ends.

THE PERSONS.

SAMSON.

MANOAH, the Father of Samson.

DALILA, his Wife.

HARAPHA of Gath.

Public Officer.

Messenger.

Chorus of Danites.

The SCENE before the Prison in Gaza.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

SAMSON.

A Little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade:
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil, 5
Daily' in the common prison else injoin'd me,
Where I a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air imprison'd also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
'The breath of Heav'n fresh blowing, pure and sweet,
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire, 11
This day a solemn feast the people hold
To Dagon their sea-idol, and forbid
Laborious works; unwillingly this rest
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave 15
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that like a deadly swarm
Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone, 20
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
O wherefore was my birth from Heav'n foretold
Twice by an Angel, who at last in sight
Of both my parents all in flames ascended 25
From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,
As in a fiery column charioting
His god-like presence, and from some great act
Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd 30
As of a person separate to God,

SAMSON AGONISTES.

63

Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
 Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,
 Made of mine enemies the scorn and gaze;
 To grind in brazen fetters under task 35
 With this Heav'n-gifted strength? O glorious strength
 Put to the labor of a beast, debas'd
 Lower than bond-slave! Promise was that I
 Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
 Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him 40
 Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
 Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke:
 Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
 Divine prediction; what if all foretold
 Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default, 45
 Whom have I to complain of but myself?
 Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
 In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
 Under the seal of silence could not keep,
 But weakly to a woman must reveal it, 50
 O'ercome with importunity and tears.
 O impotence of mind, in body strong!
 But what is strength without a double share
 Of wisdom, vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
 Proudly secure, yet liable to fall 55
 By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,
 But to subserve where wisdom bears command!
 God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
 How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
 But peace, I must not quarrel with the will 60
 Of highest dispensation, which herein
 Haply had ends above my reach to know:
 Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
 And proves the source of all my miseries;
 So many, and so huge, that each apart 65
 Would ask a life to wail, but chief of all,
 O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
 Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
 Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
 Light, the prime work of God, to me' is extinct, 70

And all her various objects of delight
 Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
 Inferior to the vilest now become
 Of man or worm ; the vilest here excel me,
 They creep, yet see, I dark in light expos'd 75
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,
 Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
 In pow'r of others, never in my own ;
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon, 80
 Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
 Without all hope of day !
 O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
 Let there be light, and light was over all ;
 Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree ? 85
 The sun to me is dark
 And silent as the moon,
 When she deserts the night
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
 Since light so necessary is to life,
 And almost life itself, if it be true 90
 That light is in the soul,
 She all in every part ; why was the fight
 To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
 So obvious and so easy to be quench'd ? 95
 And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,
 That she might look at will through every pore ?
 Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
 As in the land of darkness yet in light,
 To live a life half dead, a living death,
 And bury'd ; but O yet more miserable ! 100
 Myself, my sepulchre, a moving grave,
 Bury'd, yet not exempt
 By privilege of death and burial
 From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs, 105
 But made hereby obnoxious more
 To all the miseries of life,
 Life in captivity
 Among inhuman foes.

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 65

But who are these ? for with joint pace I hear 110
The tread of many feet steering this way ;
Perhaps my enemies who come to stare
At my affliction, and perhaps t'insult,
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

CHOR. This, this is he ; softly a while, 115

Let us not break in upon him ;
O change beyond report, thought, or belief !

See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,

With languish'd head unpropt,

As one past hope, abandon'd, 120

And by himself given over ;

In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds

O'er-worn and soil'd ;

Or do my eyes misrepresent ? Can this be he,

That heroic, that renown'd, 125

Irresistible Samson ? whom unarm'd

No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast could with-

Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid, [stand ;

Ran on imbattel'd armies clad in iron,

And weaponless himself,

Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery

Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass,

Chalybean temper'd steel, and frock of mail

Adamantean proof ;

But safest he who stood aloof, 135

When insupportably his foot advanc'd,

In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,

Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Ascalo-

Fled from his lion ramp, old warriors turn'd [nite

Their plated backs under his heel ; 140

Or grov'ling soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.

Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,

The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,

A thousand fore-skins sell, the flow'r of Palestine,

In Ramath-lechi famous to this day. 145

Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders

The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar, [bore

Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,

No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so;
 Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven.
 Which shall I first bewail, 151
 Thy bondage or lost sight,
 Prison within prison
 Inseparably dark?

Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!) 155
 The dungeon of thyself; thy soul
 (Which men enjoying fight oft without cause com-
 Imprison'd now indeed, [plain]
 In real darkness of the body dwells,
 Shut up from outward light 160
 T' incorporate with gloomy night;
 For inward light, alas,
 Puts forth no visual beam.
 O mirror of our fickle state,
 Since man on earth unparallel'd! 166
 The rarer thy example stands,
 By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
 Strongest of mortal men,
 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
 For him I reckon not in high estate 170
 Whom long descent of birth
 Or the sphere of fortune raises;
 But thee whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
 Might have subdued the earth,
 Universally crown'd with highest praises. 176

SAMS. I hear the sound of words, their sense the air
 Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

CHOR. He speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless is
 The glory late of Israel, now the grief; [might
 We come thy friends and neighbours not unknown
 From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale 181
 To visit or bewail thee, or if better,
 Counsel or consolation we may bring,
 Salve to thy sores; apt words have pow'r to swage
 The tumors of a troubled mind, 186
 And are as balm to fester'd wounds,

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 67

SAMS. Your coming, Friends, revives me, for I learn
 Now of my own experience, not by talk,
 How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
 Bear in their superscription, (of the most 190
 I would be understood) in prosp'rous days
 They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
 Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O Friends,
 How many evils have inclos'd me round;
 Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me, 195
 Blindness, for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
 How could I once look up, or heave the head,
 Who like a foolish pilot have shipwreck'd
 My vessel trusted to me from above,
 Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a fear, 200
 Fool, have divulg'd the secret gift of God
 To a deceitful woman? tell me, Friends,
 Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool
 In every street? do they not say, how well
 Are come upon him his deserts? yet why; 205
 Immeasurable strength they might behold
 In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;
 This with the other should, at least, have pair'd,
 These two proportion'd ill drove me transverse.
 CHOR. Tax not divine disposal; wisest men 210
 Have err'd, and by bad women been deceiv'd;
 And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
 Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
 Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides;
 Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder 215
 Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
 Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
 At least of thine own nation, and as noble.
 SAMS. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleas'd
 Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed 220
 The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
 That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
 From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
 The marriage on; that by occasion hence
 I might begin Israel's deliverance, 225

68 SAMSON AGONISTES.

The work to which I was divinely call'd.
 She proving false, the next I took to wife
 (O that I never had ! fond wish too late,)
 Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
 That specious monster, my accomplish'd snare. 230
 I thought it lawful from my former act,
 And the same end ; still watching to oppress
 Israel's oppressors : of what now I suffer
 She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
 Who vanquish'd with a peal of words (O weakness !)
 Gave up my fort of silence to a woman. 236

CHOR. In seeking just occasion to provoke
 The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
 Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness :
 Yet Israël still serves with all his sons. 240

SAMS. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
 On Israel's governors, and heads of tribes,
 Who seeing those great acts, which God had done
 Singly by me against their conquerors,
 Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd 245
 Deliverance offer'd : I, on th' other side
 Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds,
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the
 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem [doer ;
 To count them things worth notice, till at length
 Their lords the Philistines with gather'd pow'rs 251
 Enter'd Judea seeking me, who then
 Safe to the rock of Etham was retir'd,
 Not flying, but fore-casting in what place
 To set upon them, what advantag'd best : 255
 Mean while the men of Judah, to prevent
 The harrafs of their land, beset me round ;
 I willingly on some conditions came
 Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
 To the uncircumcis'd a welcome prey, 260
 Bound with two cords ; but cords to me were threds
 Touch'd with the flame : on their whole host I flew
 Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
 Their choicest youth ; they only liv'd who fled.

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 69

Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe, 265

They had by this possess'd the tow'rs of Gath,

And lorded over them whom now they serve :

But what more oft in nations grown corrupt,

And by their vices brought to servitude,

Than to love bondage more than liberty,

Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty ;

And to despise, or envy, or suspect

Whom God hath of his special favor rais'd

As their deliverer ; if he ought begin,

How frequent to desert him, and at last,

To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds ?

CHOR. Thy words to my remembrance bring

How Succoth and the fort of Penue!

Their great deliverer contemn'd,

The matchless Gideon in pursuit

Of Madian and her vanquish'd kings :

And how ingrateful Ephraim

Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,

Not worse than by his shield and spear,

Defended Israel from the Ammonite,

Had not his prowess quell'd their pride

In that sore battel, when so many dy'd,

Without reprieve adjudg'd to death,

For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.

SAMS. Of such examples add me to the roll, 290

Me easily indeed mine may neglect,

But God's propos'd deliverance not so.

CHOR. Just are the ways of God,

And justifiable to men ;

Unless there be who think not God at all :

If any be, they walk obscure ;

For of such doctrin never was there school,

But the heart of the fool,

And no man therein doctor but himself.

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,

As to his own edicts found contradicting,

Then give the reins to wand'ring thought,

Regardless of his glory's diminution ;

Till by their own perplexities involv'd,
They ravel more, still less resolv'd, 305
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine th' Interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right t' exempt 310
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstriction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else who never wanted means, 315
Nor in respect of th' enemy just cause
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride, 320
Unclean, unchaste.

Down reason then, at least vain reasonings down,
Though reason here aver
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his. 325

But see here comes thy reverend Sire,
With careful step, locks white as down,
Old Manoah: advise
Forthwith how thou oughtst to receive him.

SAMS. Ay me, another inward grief awak'd 330
With mention of that name renews th' assault.

MAN. Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,
As I suppose, tow'ards your once glory'd friend,
My Son now captive, hither hath inform'd 335
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Came lagging after; say if he be here.

CHOR. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in high'est, behold him where he lies.

MAN. O miserable change! is this the man, 340
That invincible Samson, far renown'd,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

71

Equivalent to Angels walk'd their streets,
 None offering fight ; who single combatant
 Duel'd their armies rank'd in proud array, 345
 Himself an army, now unequal match
 To save himself against a coward arm'd
 At one spear's length. O ever failing trust
 In mortal strength ! and oh what not in man
 Deceivable and vain ? Nay what thing good 350
 Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane ?
 I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness
 In wedlock a reproach ; I gain'd a son,
 And such a son as all men hail'd me happy ;
 Who would be now a father in my stead ? 355
 O wherefore did God grant me my request,
 And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd ?
 Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
 Our earnest pray'rs, then giv'n with solemn hand
 As grace, draw a scorpion's tail behind ? 360
 For this did th' Angel twice descend ? for this
 Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
 Select and sacred, glorious for a while,
 The miracle of men ; then in an hour
 Insar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound, 365
 Thy toes derision, captive, poor, and blind,
 Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves ?
 Alas methinks whom God hath chosen once
 To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
 He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall 370
 Subject him to so foul indignities,
 Be it but for honor's sake of former deeds,
 SAMS. Appoint not heav'nly disposition, Father ;
 Nothing of all these evils hath befall'n me
 But justly ; I myself have brought them on, 375
 Sole author I, sole cause : if ought seem vile,
 As vile hath been my folly, who' have profan'd
 The mystery of God giv'n me under pledge
 Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
 A Canaanite, my faithless enemy. 380
 This well I knew, nor was at all surpriz'd,

But warn'd by oft experience : did not she
 Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
 The secret wrested from me in her highth
 Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying it strait 385
 To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
 And rivals ? In this other was there found
 More faith, who a so in her prime of love,
 Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
 Though offer'd only, by the sent conceiv'd 390
 Her spurious first-born, treason against me ?
 Thrice she assay'd with flattering pray'rs and sighs,
 And amorous reproaches, to win from me
 My capital secret, in what part my strength [know ;
 Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might
 Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport 396
 Her importunity, each time perceiving
 How openly, and with what impudence
 She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse
 Than undissembled hate) with what contempt 400
 She sought to make me traitor to myself ;
 Yet the fourth time, when must'ring all her wiles,
 With blandish'd parlies, feminine assaults,
 Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night
 To storm me over-watch'd, and weary'd out, 405
 At times when men seek most repose and rest,
 I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart ;
 Who with a grain of manhood well resolv'd,
 Might easily have shook off all her snares :
 But foul effeminacy held me yok'd 410
 Her bond-slave ; O indignity, O blot
 To honor and religion ! servile mind
 Rewarded well with servile punishment !
 The base degree to which I now am fall'n,
 These rags, this grinding is not yet so base 415
 As was my former servitude, ignoble,
 Unmanly, ignominious, infamous.
 True slavery. and that blindness worse than this,
 That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 73

MAN. I cannot praise thy marriage choices, Son,
Rather approv'd them not ; but thou didst plead 421
Divine impulsien prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our foes.

I state not that ; this I am sure, our foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee 425
Their captive, and their triumph ; thou the sooner
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms
To violate the sacred trust of silence

Deposited within thee ; which to have kept
Tacit, was in thy pow'r : true ; and thou bear'st 430
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault ;
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains,
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza ; and proclame 435

Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud
To Dagon, as their God who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands.
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
So Dagon shall be magnify'd, and God 440
Besides whom is no God, compar'd with idols,
Disglorify'd, blasphem'd, and had in scorn
By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine ;
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest, 445
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
Could have befall'n thee and thy father's house.

SAMS. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
That I this honor, I this pomp have brought
To Dagon, and advanc'd his praises high 450
Among the Heathen round ; to God have brought
Dishonour, obloquy, and op'd the mouths
Of idolists, and atheists ; have brought scandal
To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propense enough before
To waver, or fall off and join with idols ;
Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
The anguish of my soul, that suffers not

74 SAMSON AGONISTES.

Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
 This only hope relieves me, that the strife
 With me hath end; all the contest is now
 Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presum'd,
 Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
 His deity comparing and preferring
 Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
 Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,
 But will arise and his great name assert:
 Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
 Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
 Of all these boasted trophies won on me,
 And with confusion blank his worshippers.

MAN. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these
 I as a prophecy receive; for God,
 Nothing more certain, will not long defer
 To vindicate the glory of his name
 Against all competition, nor will long
 Indure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
 Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?
 Thou must not in the mean while here forgot
 Lie in this miserable loathsome plight
 Neglected. I already have made way
 To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
 About thy ransom: well they may by this
 Have satisfy'd their utmost of revenge
 By pains and slaveries, worse than death inflicted
 On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

SAMS. Spare that proposal, Father, spare the trouble
 Of that solicitation; let me here,
 As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
 And expiate, if possible, my crime,
 Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
 Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
 How hainous had the fact been, how deserving
 Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
 All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
 The mark of fool set on his front?
 But I God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret

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SAMSON A'GONISTES.

75

Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully: a sin
That Gentiles in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confin'd. 500

MAN. Be penitent and for thy fault contrite,
But act not in thy own affliction, Son;
Repent the sin, but if the punishment
Thou can'st avoid, self-preservation bids; 505

Or th' execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself; perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;

Who ever more approves and more accepts 510
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission)

Him who imploring mercy sues for life,
Than who self-rigorous chooses death as due;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd
For self-offense, more than for God offended. 515

Reject not then what offer'd means; who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his sacred house,
Where thou may'st bring thy offerings, to avert
His further ire, with pray'rs and vows renew'd? 520

SAMS. His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it? when in strength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes
With youthful courage and m'gnanimous thoughts
Of birth from Heav'n foretold and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof 525

Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty God
I walk'd about admir'd of all and dreaded 530

On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swell'd with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Softened with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge 535
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap

76 SAMSON AGONISTES.

Of a deceitful concubine, who shorn me
Like a tame weather, all my precious fleece,
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shav'n and disarm'd among mine enemies. 540

CHOR. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou couldst repress, nor did the dancing ruby
Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavor, or the smell,
Ortaste that cheers the heart of Gods and men, 545
Allure thee from the cool crystallin stream.

SAMS. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure
With touch ethereal of Heav'n's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying 550
Thirst, and refresh'd; nor envy'd them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

CHOR. O madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
When God with these forbidd'n made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare, 556
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

SAMS. But what avail'd this temp'rance, not com-
Against another object more enticing? [pl:te
What boots it at one gate to make defense, 560
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquish'd? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonor'd, quell'd,
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth, 566
A burd'nous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pity'd object, these redundant locks
Robustious to no purpose clustring down,
Vain monument of strength; till length of years 570
And sedentary numness craze my limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure?
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,
Till vermin or the draff of servile food
Consume me, and oft-invoked death
Hasten the welcome end of all my pains, 575

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

77

MAN. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with
that gift

Which was expressly giv'n thee to annoy them?

Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,

Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age out-worn.

590

But God who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer

From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst t'allay

After the brunt of battel, can as easy

Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,

Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast;

585

And I persuade me so; why else this strength

Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?

His might continues in thee not for nought,

Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

SAMS. All otherwis: to me my thoughts portend

590

That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,

Nor th' other light of life continue long,

But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:

So much I feel my genial spirits droop,

My hopes all flat, nature within me seems

595

In all her functions weary of herself,

My race of glory run, and race of shame,

And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

MAN. Believe not these suggestions which proceed

From anguish of the mind and humors black,

600

That mingle with thy fancy. I however

Must not omit a father's timely care

To prosecute the means of thy deliverance

By ransom, or how else: mean while be calm,

And healing words from these thy friends admit.

605

SAMS. O that torment should not be confin'd

To the body's wounds and sores,

With maladies innumerable

In heart, head, breast and reins;

But must secret passage find

610

To th' inmost mind,

There exercise all his fierce accidents,

And on her purest spirits prey,

As on entrails, joints, and limbs,

With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense.

615

My griefs not only pain me

As a lingering disease,

But finding no redress, ferment and rage,

Nor less than wounds immedicable

620

Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,

To black mortification.

Thoughts my tormentors arm'd with deadly stings

Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,

Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise

625

Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb

Or medicinal liquor can assuage,

Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.

Sleep hath forsok and giv'n me o'er

629

To death's benumbing opium as my only cure:

Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,

And sense of Heav'n's desertion.

I was his nursing once and choice delight,

His destin'd from the womb,

Promis'd by heav'nly message twice descending.

635

Under his special eye

Abstemious I grew up and thriv'd amain;

He led me on to mightiest deeds

Above the nerve of mortal arm

Against th' uncircumcis'd, our enemies:

640

But now hath cast me off as never known,

And to those cruel enemies,

Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,

Left me all helpless with th' irreparable loss

Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated

645

The subject of their cruelty or scorn.

Nor am I in the list of them that hope;

Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless;

This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,

No long petition, speedy death,

650

The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

CHOR. Many are the sayings of the wise

In ancient and in modern books inroll'd,

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

79

- 615 Extolling patience as the trueſt fortitude ;
And to the bearing well of all calamities, 655
All chances incident to man's frail life,
Conſolatories writ
With ſtudy'd argument, and much perſuaſion ſought
620 Lenient of grief and anxious thought :
But with th' afflicted in his pangs their ſound 660
Little prevails, or rather ſeems a tune
Harſh, and of diſſonant mood from his complaint ;
Unleſs he feel within
625 Some ſource of conſolation from above,
Secret reſreſhings, that repair his ſtrength, 665
And fainting ſpirits uphold.
God of our fathers, what is man !
629 That thou tow'ards him with hand ſo various,
Or might I ſay contrarious,
Temper'ſt thy providence through his ſhort courſe,
Not ev'nly, as thou rul'ſt 671
Th' angelic orders and inferior creatures mute
Irrational and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
635 That wand'ring looſe about 675
Grow up and periſh, as the ſummer flie,
Heads without name no more remember'd,
But ſuch as thou haſt ſolemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd
640 To ſome great work, thy glory, 680
And people's ſafety, which in part they' effect :
Yet toward theſe thus dignify'd, thou oft
Amidſt their highth of noon
645 Changeſt thy countenance, and thy hand with no re-
Of higheſt favors paſt [gard
From thee on them, or them to thee of ſervice. 686
Nor only doſt degrade them, or remit
To life obſcur'd, which were a fair diſmiſſion,
But throw'ſt them lower than thou didſt exalt them
Unſeemly falls in human eye, [high,
650 Too grievous for the treſpaſs or omiſſion ; 691
Oft leav'ſt them to the hoſtile ſword.

30 SAMSON AGONISTES.

Of Heathen and profane, their carcases
 To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd;
 Or to th' unjust tribunals, under change of times,
 And condemnation of th' ingrateful multitude. 696
 If these they scape, perhaps in poverty
 With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
 Painful diseases and deform'd,
 In crude old age; 700
 Though not disordinate, yet causeless suff'ring
 The punishment of dissolute days: in fine,
 Jest or unjust alike seem miserable,
 For oft alike both come to evil end. 704

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
 The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
 What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already?
 Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
 His labors, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of sea or land? 710
 Female of sex it seems,
 That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
 Comes this way sailing
 Like a stately ship
 Of Tarsus, bound for th' iles 715
 Of Javan or Gadire
 With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
 Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
 Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
 An amber scent of odorous perfume 720
 Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
 Some rich Philistian matron she may seem,
 And now at nearer view, no other certain
 Than Dalila thy Wife.

SAMS. My Wife, my Trait'refs, let her not come
 near me.

CHOR. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes
 thee fix'd,

About t'have spoke, but now, with head declin'd
 Like a fair flow'r surcharg'd with dew, she weeps,
 And words address'd seem into tears dissolv'd,

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

31

Wetting the borders of her silken veil :

730

But now again she makes address to speak.

DAL. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution

I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,

Which to have merited, without excuse,

I cannot but acknowledge ; yet if tears

73

May expiate (though the fact more evil drew

In the perverse event than I foresaw)

My penance hath not slacken'd, though my pardon

No way assur'd. But conjugal affection

Prevailing over fear, and timorous doubt,

740

Hath led me on desirous to behold

Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,

If ought in my ability may serve

To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease

Thy mind with what amends is in my power, 745

Though late, yet in some part to recompense

My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

SAMS. Out, out Hyæna ; these are thy wonted arts,

And arts of every woman false like thee,

To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray, 750

Then as repentant to submit, beseech,

And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,

Confess, and promise wonders in her change,

Not truly penitent, but chief to try

Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears, 755

His virtue or weakness which way to assail :

Then with more cautious and instructed skill

Again transgresses, and again submits ;

That wisest and best men full oft beguil'd,

With goodness principled not to reject

760

The penitent, but ever to forgive,

Are drawn to wear out miserable days,

Intangled with a pois'nous bosom snake,

If not by quick destruction soon cut off

As I by thee, to ages an example.

765

DAL. Yet hear me, Samson ; not that I endevo

To lessen or extenuate my offense,

But that on th' other side if it be weigh'd

D 5

By' itself, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
 Or else with just allowance counterpois'd, 770
 I may, if possible, thy pardon find
 The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
 First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
 In me, but incident to all our sex,
 Curiosity, inquisitive, importune 775
 Of secrets, then with like infirmity
 To publish them, both common female faults:
 Was it not weakness also to make known
 For importunity, that is for nought,
 Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety? 780
 To what I did thou showd'st me first the way.
 But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not:
 Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:
 Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
 Let weakness then with weakness come to parle 785
 So near related, or the same of kind,
 Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
 The gentler, if severely thou exact not
 More strength from me, than in thyself was found.
 And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate, 790
 The jealousy of love, pow'ful of sway
 In human hearts, nor less in mine tow'rd's thee,
 Caus'd what I did? I saw thee mutable
 Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou would'st leave me
 As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore 795
 How to indear, and hold thee to me firmest:
 No better way I saw than by importuning
 To learn thy secrets, get into my power
 Thy key of strength and safety: thou wilt say,
 Why then reveal'd? I was assur'd by those 800
 Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd
 Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
 That made for me; I knew that liberty
 Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
 While I at home sat full of cares and fears, 805
 Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed;
 Here I should still enjoy thee day and night

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

83

Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines,
 Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
 Fearless at home of partners in my love. 810
 These reasons in love's law have past for good,
 Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps:
 And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
 Yet always pity' or pardon hath obtain'd.
 Be not unlike all others, not austere 815
 As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
 If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
 In uncompassionate anger do not so.

SAMS. How cunningly the sorcerers displays
 Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine? 820
 That malice not repentance brought thee hither,
 By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, th' example,
 I led the way; bitter reproach, but true;
 I to myself was false ere thou to me;
 Such pardon therefore as I give my folly, 825
 Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou seest
 Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
 Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
 Confess it feign'd: weakness is thy excuse
 And I believe it, weakness to resist 830
 Philistian gold: if weakness may excuse,
 What murderer, what traitor, parricide:
 Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
 All wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore
 With God or Man will gain thee no remission. 835
 But love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage
 To satisfy thy lust; love seeks to have love;
 My love how could'st thou hope, who took'st the way
 To raise in me inexpiable hatred
 Knowing, as needs I must, by the betray'd? 840
 In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
 Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

DAL. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
 In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
 Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides, 845
 What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;

84 SAMSON AGONISTES.

Which might have aw'd the best resolv'd of men,
 The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
 It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st
 That wrought with me: thou know'st the magistrates
 And princes of my country came in person, 850
 Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urg'd,
 Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil duty,
 And of religion, press'd how just it was,
 How honorable, how glorious to intrap 855
 A common enemy, who had destroy'd
 Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
 Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
 Preaching how meritorious with the Gods
 It would be to insnare an irreligious 860
 Dishonorer of Dagon: what had I
 T' oppose against such pow'rful arguments?
 Only my love of thee held long debate,
 And combated in silence all these reasons
 With hard contest: at length that ground'd maxim
 So rise and celebrated in the mouths 866
 Of wisest men, that to the public good
 Private respects must yield, with grave authority
 Took full possession of me and prevail'd;
 Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty so enjoining. 870
 SAMS. I thought where all thy circling wiles would
 In feign'd religion, smooth hypocrisy. [end;
 But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
 Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
 Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
 I before all the daughters of my tribe 876
 And of my nation chose thee from among
 My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st,
 Too well, unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
 Not out of levity, but overpower'd 880
 By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
 Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
 Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
 Then, as since then, thy country's foe profess'd?
 Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave 885

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 85

Parents and country ; nor was I their subject,
 Nor under their protection but my own,
 Thou mine, not theirs : if ought against my life
 Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
 Against the law of nature, law of nations, 890
 No more thy country, but an impious crew
 Of men conspiring to uphold their state
 By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
 For which our country is a name so dear ;
 Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee ;
 To please thy Gods thou didst it ; Gods unable 896
 T' acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
 But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
 Of their own deity, Gods cannot be ;
 Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd. 900
 These false pretexts and varnish'd colors failing
 Bare in thy guilt how foul must thou appear ?

DAL. In argument with men a woman ever
 Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

SAMS. For want of words no doubt, or lack of
 Witness when I was worried with thy peals. [breath ;

DAL. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
 In what I thought would have succeeded best.

Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson,
 Afford me place to show what recompense 910
 Tow'ards thee I intend for what I have misdone,

Misguided ; only what remains past cure
 Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist

T' afflict thyself in vain : though sight be lost,
 Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd 915

Where other senses want not their delights
 At home in leisure and domestic ease,

Exempt from many a care and chance to which
 Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.

I to the lords will intercede, not doubting 920
 Their favorable ear, that I may fetch thee

From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
 With me, where my redoubled love and care

With nursing diligence, to me glad office,

May ever tend about thee to old age 625
 With all things grateful chear'd, and so supply'd,
 That what by me thou' hast lost thou least shalt miss.

SAMS. No, no, of my condition take no care;
 It fits not; thou and I long since are twain;
 Nor think me so unwary or accurs'd, 930
 To bring my feet again into the snare
 Where once I have been caught; I know thy trains
 Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
 Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms
 No more on me have pow'r, their force is null'd,
 So much of adder's wisdom I have learn'd 936
 To fence my ear against thy forceries.

If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
 Lov'd, honor'd, fear'd me, thou alone could'st hate me
 Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forgo me; 940
 How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
 Deceivable, in most things as a child
 Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,
 And last neglected? How wouldst thou insult,
 When I must live uxorious to thy will 945
 In perfect thralldom, how again betray me,
 Bearing my words and doings to the lords
 To gloss upon, and censuring, frown or smile?
 This jail I count the house of liberty
 To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter. 950

DAL. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

SAMS. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance
 My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint. [wake
 At distance I forgive thee, go with that;
 Bewail thy falshood, and the pious works 955
 It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
 Among illustrious women, faithful wives:
 Cherish thy hasten'd widowhood with the gold
 Of matrimonial treason: so farewell.

DAL. I see thou art implacable, more deaf 960
 To pray'rs, than winds or seas, yet winds to seas
 Are reconcil'd at length, and sea to shore:
 Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

87

Eternal tempest never to be calm'd.
 Why do I humble thus myself, and suing 965
 For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate?
 Bid go with evil omen and the brand
 Of infamy upon my name denounc'd?
 To mix with thy concernments I desist
 Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own. 970
 Fame if not double-fac'd is double-mouth'd,
 And with contrary black proclames most deeds;
 On both his wings, one black, the other white,
 Bears greatest names in his wild airy flight.
 My name perhaps among the circumcis'd. 975
 In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
 To all posterity may stand defam'd,
 With malediction mention'd, and the blot
 Of falshood most unconjugal traduc'd.
 But in my country where I most desire, 980
 In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
 I shall be fam'd among the famousest
 Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
 Living and dead recorded, who to save
 Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose 985
 Above the faith of wedlock-bands, my tomb
 With odors visited and annual flowers;
 Not less renown'd than in mount Ephraim
 Jael, who with inhospitable guile
 Smote Sisera sleeping through the temples nail'd.
 Nor shall I count it hainous to enjoy
 The public marks of honor and reward
 Conferr'd upon me, for the piety
 Which to my country I was judg'd to have shown.
 At this whoever envies or repines, 995
 I leave him to his lot, and like my own.
 CHOR. She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
 Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.
 SAMS. So let her go, God sent her to debase me,
 And aggravate my folly, who committed 1000
 To such a viper his most sacred trust
 Of secrecy, my safety, and my life.

38 SAMSON AGONISTES.

CHOR. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange
After offense returning, to regain [power,
Love once possess'd, nor can be easily 1005
Repuls'd, without much inward passion felt
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

SAMS. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock-treachery indang'ring life.

CHOR. It is not virtue, wisdom, valor, wit, 1010
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit
That woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit,

(Which way soever men refer it) 1015
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or sev'n, though one should musing sit.

If any of these or all, the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferr'd
Thy paranymp, worthless to thee compar'd, 1020
Successor in thy bed,
Nor both so loosely disally'd
Their nuptials, nor did this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.

Is it for that such outward ornament 2025
Was lavish'd on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgment scant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend
Or value what is best

In choice, but often to affect the wrong? 1030
Or was too much of self-love mix'd,
Of constancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing, or not long?

Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best
Seeming at first all heav'nly under virgin veil, 1035
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn
Intestin, far within defensive arms
A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms 1040
Draws him away inflav'd

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 89

With dotage, and his sense deprav'd
To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck
Imbark'd with such a steers-mate at the helm? 1045

Favor'd of Heav'n who finds
One virtuous rarely found,
That in domestic good combines:
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But virtue which breaks through all opposition, 1050
And all temptation can remove,
Most shines and most is acceptable above.

Therefore God's universal law
Gave to the man despotic power
Over his female in due awe, 1055
Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or lour:

So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not sway'd
By female usurpation, or dismay'd. 1060
But had we best retire, I see a storm?

SAMS. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain,

CHOR. But this another kind of tempest brings.

SAMS. Be less obtruse, my riddling days are past.

CHOR. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue 1065

Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride

The giant Harapha of Gath, his look

Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.

Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him
hither

less conjecture than when first I saw 1071

The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:

His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

SAMS. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

CHOR. His fraught we soon shall know, he now
arrives. 1075

HAR. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,

as these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,

though for no friendly' intent. I am of Gath,

90 SAMSON AGONISTES.

Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd
 As Og or Anak and the Enims old 1080
 That Kiriathaim held, thou know'st me now
 If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
 Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd
 Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,
 That I was never present on the place 1085
 Of those encounters, where we might have try'd
 Each other's force in camp or list'd field.
 And now am come to see of whom such noise
 Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
 If thy appearance answer loud report. 1090

SAMS. The way to know were not to see but taste,

HAR. Dost thou already single me? I thought
 Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee. O that fortune
 Had brought me to the field, where thou had fam'd
 To have wrought such wonders with an afs's jaw;
 I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,
 Or left thy carcase where the afs lay thrown:
 So had the glory' of prowess been recover'd
 To Palestine, won by a Philistine 1099
 From the unforeskin'd race, of whom thou bear'st
 The highest name for valiant acts; that honor
 Certain to 'have won by mortal duel from thee
 I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

SAMS. Boast not of what thou wouldst have done,
 but do 1104

What then thou wouldst, thou seest it in thy hand.

HAR. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
 And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

SAMS. Such usage as your honorable lords
 Afford me' assassinated and betray'd,
 Who durst not with their whole united powers 1110
 In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
 Nor in the house with chamber ambushes
 Close-banded durst attack me, no not sleeping
 Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold
 Breaking her marriage faith to circumvent me 1115
 Therefore without feign'd shifts let be assign'd

SAMSON AGONISTES. 91

Some narrow place inclos'd, where fight may give thee
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon, 1120
Vant-brass and greves, and gauntlet, add thy spear,
A weaver's beam, and sev'n-times-folded shield,
I only with an oaken-staff will meet thee,
And raise such outcries on thy clatter'd iron, 1124
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time while breath remains thee,
Then oft shall wish thyself at Gath to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

HAR. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms,
Which greatest heroes have in battel worn, 1128
Their ornament and safety, had not spells
And black enchantments, some magician's art,
Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from
Heaven

Feign'dst at thy birth was giv'n thee in thy air,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back
Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.

SAMS. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;
My trust is in the living God, who gave me 1140
At my nativity this strength, diffus'd
No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,
Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy God, 1145
Go to his temple, invoke his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,
Which I to be the power of Israel's God 1150
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
Offering to combat thee his champion bold,
With the utmost of his Godhead seconded :

Then shalt thou see, or rather to thy sorrow 1154
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

HAR. Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be,
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and deliver'd up
Into thy enemies hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee
Into the common prison, there to grind 1161
Among the slaves and asses thy comrades,
As good for nothing else, no better service
With those thy boist'rous locks, no worthy match
For valor to assail, nor by the sword 1165
Of noble warrior, so to stain his honor,
But by the barber's razor best subdued.

SAMS. All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me 1170
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant;
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight, 1175
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

HAR. Fair honor that thou dost thy God, in
trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A Murderer, a Revolter, and a Robber. 1180

SAMS. Tongue-doughty Giant, how dost thou
prove me these?

HAR. Is not thy nation subject to our lords?
Their magistrates confess'd it, when they took thee
As a league-breaker and deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed 1185
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,
Then like a robber stripp'dst them of their robes?
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 93

Went up with armed pow'rs thee only seeking,
To others did no violence nor spoil. 1191

SAMS. Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argu'd me no foe ;
And in your city held my nuptial feast :
But your ill-meaning politician lords, 1195

Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who threatning cruel death, constrain'd the bride
To wring from me and tell to them my secret,
That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd. 1200

When I perceiv'd all set on enemy,
As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd,
I us'd hostility, and took their spoil
To pay my underminers in their coin.
My nation was subjected to your lords. 1205

It was the force of conquest ; force with force
Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.

But I a private person, whom my country
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd
Single rebellion and did hostile acts. 1210

I was no private but a person rais'd
With strength sufficient and command from Heaven

1175 To free my country ; if their servile minds
Me their deliverer sent would not receive,
But to their masters gave me up for nought, 1215
Th' unworthier they ; whence to this day they serve.

I was to do my part from Heav'n assign'd,
And had perform'd it, if my known offense
Had not disabled me, not all your force :

1180 These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant 1220
Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts ;

Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

HAR. With thee a man condemn'd, a slave inroll'd,
Due by the law to capital punishment ? 1224

To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

SAMS. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to sur-
vey me,

their robes ?
e the league,

64 SAMSON AGONISTES.

To descend on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer, part not hence so slight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee. 1230

HAR. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unu'd
Hear these dishonors, and not render death?

SAMS. No man witholds thee, nothing from thy
hand

Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free. 1235

HAR. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

SAMS. Go baffled coward, lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down 1240
To th' hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

HAR. By Astaroth ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries in irons loaden on thee.

CHOR. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fall'n,
Striking with less unconscionable strides. 1245
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

SAMS. I dread him not, nor all his giant-brood
Though fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantic size, Goliath chief.

CHOR. He will directly to the lords, I fear, 1250
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

SAMS. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not, 1255
And that he durst not plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labors,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners. 1260
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence,
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their end

SAMSON AGONISTES.

95

Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

CHOR. Oh how comely it is, and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long oppress'd !
When God into the hands of their deliverer 1270
Puts invincible might

To quell the mighty of the earth, th' oppressor
The brute and boist'rous force of violent men

Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannic pow'r, but raging to pursue 1275

The righteous and all such as honor truth ;
He all their ammunition

And seats of war defeats

With plain heroic magnitude of mind

And celestial vigor arm'd 1280

Their armories and magazines contemns

Renders them useless, while

With winged expedition

Swift as the lightning glance he executes

His errand on the wicked, who surpris'd 1285

Lose their defense distracted and amaz'd.

But patience is more oft the exercise

Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,

Making them each his own deliverer,

And victor over all

That tyranny or fortune can inflict. 1290

Either of these is sin thy lot

Samson, with might indued

Above the sons of men ; but fight bereav'd

May chance to number thee with those 1295

Whom patience finally must crown.

This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest.

Laboring thy mind

More than the working day thy hands.

And yet perhaps more trouble is behind 1300

For I descry this way

Some other tending, in his hand

A scepter or quaint staff he bears,

Comes on amain, speed in his look.

By his habit I discern him now

1306

A public Officer, and now at hand.

His message will be short and voluble.

OFF. Hebrews, the pris'ner Samson here I seek.

CHOR. His manacles remark him, there he sits.

OFF. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say;
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,

1311

With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games;

Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,

And now some public proof thereof require

To honor this great feast, and great assembly; 1315

Rise therefore with all speed and come along,

Where I will see thee hearten'd and fresh clad

To' appear as fits before th' illustrious lords. [them,

SAMS. Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tell
Our Law forbids at their religious rites

1320

My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

OFF. This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.

SAMS. Have they not sword-players, and every sort
Of gymnic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,

Juglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimcis,

But they must pick me out with shackles tir'd, 1326

And over-labor'd at their public mill,

To make them sport with blind activity?

Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels

On my refusal to distress me more,

1330

Or make a game of my calamities?

Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.

OFF. Regard thyself, this will offend them highly.

SAMS. Myself? my conscience and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so bebas'd

1335

With corporal servitude, that my mind ever

Will condescend to such absurd commands?

Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,

And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief

To show them feats, and play before their God, 1340

The worst of all indignities, yet on me

Join'd with extreme contempt? I will not come.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

97

OFF. My message was impos'd on me with speed,
Brooks no delay : is this thy resolution ? 1344

SAMS. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

OFF. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

SAMS. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow
indeed.

CHOR. Consider, Samson ; matters now are strain'd
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break ;
He's gone, and who knows how he may report 1350
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame ?

Expect another message more imperious,
More lordly thund'ring than thou well wilt bear.

SAMS. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair 1355

After my great transgression, so requite

Favor renew'd, and add a greater sin

By prostituting holy things to idols ;

A Nazarite in place abominable

Vaunting my strength in honor to their Dagon ? 1360

Besides how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,

What act more execrably unclean, profane ?

CHOR. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Phi-
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean. [listless,

SAMS. Not in their idol-worship, but by labor
Honest and lawful to deserve my food 1366

Of those who have me in their civil power.

CHOR. Where the heart joins not, outward acts de-
file not.

SAMS. Where outward force constrains, the sen-
tence holds.

But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon
Not dragging ? the Philistian lords command. 1371

Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,

I do it freely, vent'ring to displease

God for the fear of Man, and Man prefer,

Set God behind : which in his jealousy 1371

Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness,

Yet that he may dispense with me or thee

Present in temples at idolatrous rites

For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt. 187

CHOR. How thou wilt here come off surmounts me

SAMS. Be of good courage, I begin to feel [reach

Some rousing motions in me which dispose

To something extraordinary my thoughts.

I with this messenger will go along,

Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonor 188

Our Law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.

If there be ought of presage in the mind,

This day will be remarkable in my life

By some great act, or of my days the last. 189

CHOR. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns

OFF. Samson, this second message from our lords

To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave,

Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,

And dar'st thou at our sending and command

Dispute thy coming? come without delay; 190

Or we shall find such engines to assail

And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,

Though thou wert firmer fasten'd than a rock.

SAMS. I could be well content to try their art,

Which to no few of them would prove pernicious

Yet knowing their advantages too many, 191

Because they shall not trail me through their streets

Like a wild beast, I am content to go.

Masters commands come with a pow'r resistless

To such as owe them absolute subjection; 192

And for a life who will not change his purpose?

(So mutable are all the ways of men)

Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply

Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

OFF. I praise thy resolution: doff these links

By this compliance thou wilt win the lords 193

To favor, and perhaps to set thee free.

SAMS. Brethren farewell; your company also

I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them

To see me girt with friends; and how the fight 194

Of me as of a common enemy,

So dreaded once, may now exasperate them

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I know not: lords are lordliest in their wine;
 And the well-feasted priest then soonest fir'd
 With zeal, if ought religion seem'd concern'd; 1420
 No less the people on their holy-days
 Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable:
 Happen what may, of me expect to hear
 Nothing dishonorable, impure, unworthy
 Our God, our Law, my Nation, or myself, 1425
 The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

CHOR. Go, and the Holy One
 Of Israel be thy guide
 To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
 Great among the Heathen round; 1430
 Send thee the Angel of thy birth, to stand
 Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
 Rode up in flames after his message told
 Of thy conception, and be now a shield
 Of fire; that Spirit that first rush'd on thee 1435
 In the camp of Dan
 Be efficacious in thee now at need.
 For never was from Heav'n imparted
 Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
 As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen. 1440
 But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste
 With youthful steps? much livelier than ere while
 He seems: supposing here to find his son,
 Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

MAN. Peace with you, Brethren; my inducement
 Was not at present here to find my son, [hither
 By order of the lords new parted hence
 To come and play before them at their feast.
 I heard all as I came, the city rings,
 And numbers thither flock, I had no will, 1450
 Lest I should see him forc'd to thin's unseemly.
 But that which moy'd my coming now, was chiefly
 To give ye part with me what hope I have
 With good success to work his liberty.

CHOR. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
 With thee; say, reverend Sire, we thirst to hear. 1456

MAN. I have attempted one by one the lords
 Either at home, or through the high street passing,
 With supplication prone and father's tears,
 T'accept of ransome for my son their pris'ner. 1460
 Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
 Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
 That part most reverenc'd Dagon and his priests:
 Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
 Private reward, for which both God and State 1465
 They easily would set to sale: a third
 More generous far and civil, who confess'd
 They had enough reveng'd, having reduc'd
 Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
 The rest was magnanimity to remit, 1470
 If some convenient ransome were propos'd.
 What noise or shout was that? it tore the sky.

CHOR. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
 Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
 Or at some proof of strength before them shown. 1475

MAN. His ransome, if my whole inheritance
 May compass it, shall willingly be paid
 And number'd down: much rather I shall choose
 To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
 And he in that calamitous prison left. 1480
 No, I am fix'd not to part hence without him.
 For his redemption all my patrimony,
 If need be, I am ready to forgo
 And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

CHOR. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons,
 Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all; 1485
 Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
 Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son
 Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.

MAN. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes, 1490
 And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
 With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,
 And on his shoulders waving down those locks,
 That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd:
 And I persuade me God had not permitted 1495

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

108

His strength again to grow up with his hair
Garrison'd round about him like a camp
Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
To use him further yet in some great service,
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him. 1500

And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

CHOR. Thy hopes are not ill founded nor seem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon 1505

Conceiv'd, agreeable to a father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate.

MAN. I know your friendly minds and—O what
noise!

Mercy of Heav'n, what hideous noise was that!
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout. 1510

CHOR. Noise call you it or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd!

Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

MAN. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise:
Oh it continues, they have slain my son. 1516

CHOR. Thy son is rather slaying them, that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

MAN. Some dismal accident it needs must be;
What shall we do, stay here or run and see? 1520

CHOR. Best keep together here, lest running thither
We unawares run into danger's mouth.

This evil on the Philistines is fall'n;
From whom could else a general cry be heard?

The sufferers then will scarce molest us here, 1525
From other hands we need not much to fear.

What if his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,

He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way? 1530

MAN. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.
CHOR. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible

For his people of old; what hinders now?

MAN. He can I know, but doubt to think he will ;
Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief.
A little stay will bring some notice hither. 1536

CHOR. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner ;
For evil new rides post, while good news baits.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe. 1540

MESS. O whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld and yet behold ?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems, 1545
Or reason though disturb'd, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horror, 1550
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

MAN. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not ;
No preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

MESS. It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter. 1556

MAN. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.

MESS. Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fall'n,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.

MAN. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest
The desolation of a hostile city. 1561

MESS. Feed on that first, there may in grief be surfeit.

MAN. Relate by whom. MESS. By Samson.

MAN. That still offends

The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

MESS. Ah Manoah, I refrain, too suddenly 1565
To utter what will come at last too soon ;

Lest evil tidings with too rude irruption

Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

MAN. Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.

MESS. Take then the worst in brief, Samson is dead.

MAN. The worst indeed, O all my hope's defeated

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

103

To free him hence! but death who sets all free
Hath paid his ranfome now and full discharge.

What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves 1575
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!

Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first,
How dy'd he; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell thou say'st, by whom fell he, 1580
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

MESS. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

MAN. Wearied with slaughter then or how? explain:

MESS. By his own hands.

MAN. Self-violence? what cause

Brought him so soon at variance with himself 1585

Among his foes? MESS. Inevitable cause

At once both to destroy and be destroy'd;
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.

MAN. O lastly over-strong against thyself! 1590

A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.

More than enough we know; but while things yet

Are in confusion, give us if thou canst,

Eye witness of what first or last was done,

Relation more particular and distinct. 1595

MESS. Occasions drew me early to this city,

And as the gates I enter'd with sun-rise,

The morning trumpets festival proclam'd

Through each high street: little I had dispatch'd,

When all abroad was rumor'd that this day 1600

Samson should be brought forth, to show the people

Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;

I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded

Not to be absent at that spectacle.

The building was a spacious theatre

1605

Half-round on two main pillars vaulted high,

With seats where all the lords and each degree

Of sort, might sit in order to behold;

The other side was open, where the strong

104 — SAMSON AGONISTES.

On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand ; 1610
 I among these aloof obscurely stood.
 The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
 Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer and wine,
 When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
 Was Samson as a public servant brought, 1615
 In their state livery clad ; before him pipes
 And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
 Both horse and foot, before him and behind
 Archers, and slingers, cataphracts and spears.
 At sight of him the people with a shout 1620
 Risted the air, clamoring their God with praise,
 Who' had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
 He patient but undaunted where they led him,
 Came to the place, and what was set before him,
 Which without help of eye might be assay'd, 1625
 To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
 All with incredible, stupendious force,
 None daring to appear antagonist.
 At length for intermission sake they led him
 Between the pillars ; he his guide requested 1630
 (For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
 As over-tir'd to let him lean a while
 With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
 That to the arched roof gave main support.
 He unsuspecting led him ; which when Samson 1635
 Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd,
 And eyes fast fix'd he stood, as one who pray'd,
 Or some great matter in his mind resolv'd :
 At last with head erect thus cry'd aloud,
 Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd
 I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying, 1640
 Not without wonder or delight beheld :
 Now of my own accord such other trial
 I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater ;
 As with amaze shall strike all who behold. 1645
 This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd,
 As with the force of winds and waters pent,
 When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars

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SAMSON AGONISTES.

103

With horrible convulsion to and fro,
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
Their choice nobility and flow'r, not only
Of this but each Philistian city round
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
Samson with these immix'd, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
The vulgar only scap'd who stood without.

1655

CHOR. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israël, and now ly'st victorious
Among thy slain self-kill'd
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more
Than all thy life had slain before.

1665

SEMICHOR. While their hearts were jocond and
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine, [sublime,
And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,
Chaunting their idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells

In Silo his bright sanctuary:

Among them he a spi'rit of phrenzy sent,
Who hurt their minds,

1675

And urg'd them on with mad desire
To call in haste for their destroyer;
They only set on sport and play

Unweetingly importun'd

1680

Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.

So fond are mortal men

Fall'n into wrath divine,

As their own ruin on themselves t'invite,

Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,

1685

And with blindness internal struck,

206 **SAMSON AGONISTES.**

SEMICHOR. But he, though blind of sight,
 Despis'd and thought extinguish'd quite,
 With inward eyes illuminated,
 His fiery virtue rous'd 1690
 From under ashes into sudden flame,
 And as an evening dragon came,
 Assailant on the perched roofs,
 And nests in order rang'd
 Of tame villatic fowl; but as an eagle 1695
 His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads,
 So virtue giv'n for lost,
 Depress'd and overthrown, as seem'd,
 Like that self-begotten bird
 In the Arabian woods imboist, 1700
 That no second knows nor third,
 And lay ere while a holocaust,
 From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
 Revives, re florishes, then vigorous most
 When most unactive deem'd, 1705
 And though her body die, her fame survives
 A secular bird ages of lives.

MAN. Come, come, no time for lamentation now,
 Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself
 Like Samson, and heroically hath finish'd 1710
 A life heroic, on his enemies
 Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,
 And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor
 Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel
 Honor hath left, and freedom, let but them 1715
 Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
 To' himself and father's house eternal fame;
 And which is best and happiest yet, all this
 With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,
 But favouring and assisting to the end. 1720
 Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
 Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,
 Dispraise, or blame, nothing but well and fair,
 And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
 Let us go find the body where it lies 1725

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SAMSON AGONISTES. 107

Sok'd in his enemies blood, and from the stream
 With lavers pure and cleansing herbs wash off
 The clotted gore. I with what speed the while
 (Gaza is not in plight to say us nay)
 Will send for all my kindred, all my friends, 1730
 To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
 With silent obsequy and funeral train
 Home to his father's house : there will I build him
 A monument, and plant it round with shade
 Of laurel ever green, and branching palm, 1735
 With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd
 In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
 Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
 And from his memory inflame their breasts
 To matchless valor, and adventures high : 1740
 The virgins also shall on feastful days
 Visit his tomb with flow'rs, only bewailing
 His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
 From whence captivity and loss of eyes.
 CHOR. All is best, though we oft doubt, 1745
 What th' unsearchable dispose
 Of highest wisdom brings about,
 And ever best found in the close.
 Oft he seems to hide his face,
 But unexpectedly returns, 1750
 And to his faithful champion hath in place
 Bore witness gloriously ; whence Gaza mourns
 And all that band them to resist
 His uncontrollable intent ;
 His servants he with new acquit 1755
 Of true experience from this great event
 With peace and consolation hath dismiss'd,
 And calm of mind all passion spent.

THE END.

P O E M S
U P O N
SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

Compos'd at several times,

B Y

Mr. JOHN MILTON.

— Baccare frontem
Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro.
Virgil, Eclog. 7.

To the
1645

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To the first edition of the author's poems printed in 1645 was prefixed the following advertisement of

The STATIONER to the READER.

IT is not any private respect of gain, gentle Reader, for the slightest pamphlet is now adays more vendible than the works of learnedest men; but it is the love I have to our own language, that hath made me diligent to collect and set forth such pieces both in prose and verse, as may renew the wonted honor and esteem of our English tongue; and it's the worth of these both English and Latin poems, not the flourish of any prefixed encomiums that can invite thee to buy them, though these are not without the highest commendations and applause of the learnedest Academics, both domestic and foreign; and amongst those of our own country, the unparallel'd attestation of that renowned Provost of Eton, Sir Henry Wotton. I know not thy palate how it relishes such dainties, nor how harmonious thy soul is; perhaps more trivial airs may please thee better. But howsoever thy opinion is spent upon these, that encouragement I have already received from the most ingenious men in their clear and courteous entertainment of Mr. Waller's late choice pieces, hath once more made me adventure into the world, presenting it with these ever-green, and not to be blasted laurels. The Author's more peculiar excellency in these studies was too well known to conceal his papers, or to keep me from attempting to solicit them from him. Let the event guide itself which way it will, I shall deserve of the age, by bringing into the light as true a birth, as the Muses have brought forth since our famous Spenser wrote; whose poems in these English ones are as rarely imitated, as sweetly excell'd. Reader, if thou art eagle-ey'd to censure their worth, I am not fearful to expose them to thy exactest perusal.

Thine to command,

HUMPH. MOSELEY.

P O E M S
O N
SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

I.

A N N O Æ T A T I S 17.

On the death of a fair Infant, dying of a cough.

I.

O Fairest flow'r no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honor, if thou hadst out-lasted
Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
For he being amorous on that lovely dye
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiſs,
But kill'd, alas, and then bewail'd his fatal bliſs. 5

II.

For ſince grim Aquilo his charioteer
By boiſtrous rape th' Athenian damſel got,
He thought it touch'd his deity full near, 10
If likewiſe he ſome fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away th' infamous blot
Of long-uncoupled bed, and childleſs eld, [held.
Which 'mongſt the wanton Gods a foul reproach was

III.

So mounting up in icy-pearled car, 15
Through middle empire of the freezing air
He wander'd long, till thee he ſpy'd from far;
There ended was his queſt, there ceaſ'd his care.
Down he deſcended from his ſnow-ſoft chair,
But all unware with his cold-kind embrace 20
Unhouſ'd thy virgin ſoul from her fair biding place.

POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 111

IV.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate ;
 For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
 Whilome did slay his dearly-loved mate,
 Young Hyacinth born on Eurota's strand, 25
 Young Hyacinth the pride of Spartan land ;
 But then transform'd him to a purple flower :
 Alack that so to change thee Winter had no power.

V.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb, 30
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
 Hid from the world in a low delved tomb ;
 Could Heav'n for pity thee so strictly doom ?
 Oh no ! for something in thy face did shine
 Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine. 35

VI.

Resolve me then, oh Soul most surely blest,
 (If so it be that thou these complaints dost hear)
 Tell me bright Spirit where'er thou hoverest,
 Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
 Or in th' Elysian fields (if such there were) 40
 Oh say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
 And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight.

VII.

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
 Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall ;
 Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof 45
 Took up, and in fit place did reinstall ?
 Or did of late earth's sons besiege the wall
 Of sheeny Heav'n, and thou some Goddess fled
 Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head ?

VIII.

Or wert thou that just Maid who once before 50
 Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
 And cam'st again to visit us once more ?
 Or wert thou that sweet smiling Youth ?
 Or that crown'd matron sage white-robed Truth ?

THE POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Or any other of that heav'nly brood 55
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good ?

IX.

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed, 60
As if to show what creatures Heav'n doth breed,
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heav'n aspire ?

X.

But oh why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy heav'n-lov'd innocence, 65
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,

To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart ?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

XI.

Then thou the Mother of so sweet a Child
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild ;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent ; 75
This if thou do, he will an offspring give, [live.
That till the world's last end shall make thy name to

II.

Anno Ætatis 19. At a Vacation Exercise in the
College, part Latin, part English. The Latin
speeches ended, the English thus began.

HAIL native Language, that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavoring tongue to speak.
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half unpronounc'd, slide through my infant-lips,
Driving dumb silence from the portal door,
Where he had mutely sat two years before ;

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55 Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
 good ? That now I use thee in my latter task :
 Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,
 I know my tongue but little grace can do thee : 10
 Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,
 Believe me I have thither packt the worst :
 60 And, if it happen as I did forecast,
 The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.
 I pray thee then deny me not thy aid 15
 For this same small neglect that I have made :
 But haste thee strait to do me once a pleasure,
 And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,
 65 Not those new fangled toys, and trimming slight
 foe, Which takes our late fantasticks with delight, 20
 But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire
 Which deepest spirits, and choicest wits desire :
 I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
 And loudly knock to have their passage out ;
 And weary of their place do only stay 25
 Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array ;
 That so they may without suspect or fears
 Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears ;
 Yet I had rather, if I were to chuse,
 75 Thy service in some graver subject use, 30
 [live. Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
 name to Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound :
 Such where the deep transported mind may soar
 Above the wheeling poles, and at Heav'n's door
 Look in, and see each blissful Deity 35
 How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
 List'ning to what unshorn Apollo sings
 To th' touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
 Immortal nectar to her kingly fire :
 Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire, 40
 And misty regions of wide air next under,
 And hills of snow and lofts of piled thunder,
 May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,
 In Heav'n's defiance mustering all his waves ;

114 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Then sing of secret things that came to pass 40
 When beldam Nature in her cradle was;
 And last of kings and queens and heroes old,
 Such as the wise Demodocus once told
 In solemn songs at king Alcinous feast,
 While sad Ulysses soul and all the rest 60
 Are held with his melodious harmony
 In willing chains and sweet captivity.
 But fie, my wand'ring Muse, how thou dost stray!
 Expectance calls thee now another way,
 Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent 35
 To keep in compass of thy predicament:
 Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,
 That to the next I may resign my room.

Then Ens is represented as father of the Predicaments his ten sons, whereof the eldest stood for Substance with his canons, which Ens, thus speaking, explains.

GOOD luck befriend thee, Son; for at thy birth 60
 The faery ladies danc'd upon the hearth;
 Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spie
 Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
 And sweetly singing round about thy bed
 Strow all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
 She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
 From eyes of mortals walk invisible: 66
 Yet there is something that doth force my fear,
 For once it was my dismal hap to hear
 A Sibyl old, bow bent with crooked age,
 That far events full wisely could presage, 70
 And in time's long and dark prospective glass
 Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
 Your son, said she, (nor can you it prevent)
 Shall subject be to many an Accident.
 O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king, 75
 Yet every one shall make him underling,

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 119

And those that cannot live from him asunder,
 Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under,
 In worth and excellence he shall out-go them;
 Yet being above them, he shall be below them, 80
 From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
 Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.
 To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
 And peace shall lull him in her flow'ry lap;
 Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door 85
 Devouring war shall never cease to roar:
 Yea it shall be his natural property
 To harbour those that are at enmity.
 What pow'r, what force, what mighty spell, if not
 Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot? 90

The next Quantity and Quality spoke in prose, then
 Relation was call'd by his name.

RIVERS arise, whether thou be the son,
 Of utmost Tweed, or Ouse, or gulphy Dun,
 Or Trent, who like some earth-born giant spreads
 His thirty arms along th' indented meads,
 Or sullen Mole that runneth underneath, 95
 Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death,
 Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
 Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee,
 Or Humber loud that keeps the Scythian's name,
 Or Medway smooth, or royal towred Thame. 100
 [The rest was prose.]

III.

On the MORNING of CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

Compos'd 1629.

I.

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
 Wherein the Son of Heav'n's eternal King,

116 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Of wedded Maid, and Virgin-Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing, 5
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he went at Heav'n's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III.

Say heav'nly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein 15
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the Heav'n by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light, 20
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons
bright?

IV.

See how from far upon the eastern road
The star-led wisards haste with odors sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet; 25
Have thou the honor first, thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel quire,
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire,

The H Y M N.

I.

IT was the winter wild,
While the Heav'n-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies; 30

POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 117

Nature in awe to him
Had doff'd her gawdy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize :
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun her lusty paramour. 38

II.

Only with speeches fair
She woo's the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The faintly veil of maiden white to throw,
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities. 49

III.

But he her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace ;
She crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land. 55

IV.

No war, or battel's sound
Was heard the world around :
The idle spear and shield were high up hung, 55
The hooked chariot stood,
Unstain'd with hostile blood,
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng,
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by. 60

V.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began :
The winds with wonder whist
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whisp'ring new joys to the mild ocean, 65

118 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS,

Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave,

VI.

The stars with deep amaze
Stand fix'd in stedfast gaze, 70
 Bending one way their precious influence,
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
 Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow, 75
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
 The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame, 80
At his inferior flame
 The new inlighten'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree could bear.

VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn, 85
Or e'er the point of dawn,
 Sat simply chatting in a rustic row
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
 Was kindly come to live with them below; 90
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep,

IX.

When such music sweet,
Their hearts and ears did greet,
 As never was by mortal finger strook, 95
Divinely warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise
 As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air such pleasure loath to lose, 99
With thousand echo's still prolongs each heav'nly close.

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 119

X.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done, 105
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heav'n and Earth in happier union.

XI.

At last surrounds their fight
A globe of circular light, 110
That with long beams the shame-fac'd night array'd;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire, 115
With unexpressive notes to Heav'n's new-born Heir.

XII.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great 120
His constellations set,
And the well-balanc'd world on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltring waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII.

Ring out ye crystal Spheres, 125
Once bless our human ears,
(If ye have pow'r to touch our senses so)
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
And let the base of Heav'n's deep organ blow,
And with your ninefold harmony 130
Make up full consort to th' angelic symphony,

XIV.

For if such holy song
Inwrap our fancy long,

120 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold, 13
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mold,
And Hell itself will pass away, 139
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

XV.

Yea Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and like glories wearing
Mercy will sit between,
Thron'd in celestial sheen, 145
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering,
And Heav'n, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

XVI.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so, 150
The babe lies yet in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first to those ychain'd in sleep, [deep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the

XVII.

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire, and smouldring clouds out
The aged earth aghast, [brake:
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the center shake;
When at the world's last session, [throne,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his

XVIII.

And then at last our bliss 160
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for from this happy day

POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 121

Th' old Dragon under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurped sway, 170
And wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swiages the scaly horror of his folded tail.

XIX.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine 176
Can no more divine,

With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell 179
Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetic cell.

XX.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring, and dale, 185
Edg'd with poplar pale,

The parting Genius is with sighing sent:
With flower-inwoven tresses torn [mourn.
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets

XXI.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth, 190
The Lars, and Lemures moan with midnight plaint
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound

Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat, 195
While each peculiar Pow'r forgoes his wonted feat.

XXII.

Peor and Baälím
Forfake their temples dim,
With that twice batter'd God of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth, 200
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers holy shine;

222 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn, [mourn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz

XXIII.

And sullen Moloch fled, 205

Hath left in shadows dread

His burning idol all of blackest hue ;

In vain with cymbals ring

They call the grisly king,

In dismal dance about the furnace blue ; 210

The brutish Gods of Nile as fast,

Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste.

XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen

In Memphian grove or green,

Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud ;

Nor can he be at rest 216

Within his sacred chest,

Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud ;

In vain with timbrel'd anthems dark

The sable-stoled forcerers beat his worshipt ark. 220

XXV.

He feels from Juda's land

The dreaded Infant's hand,

The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn ;

Nor all the Gods beside,

Longer dare abide, 225

Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine :

Our babe to show his Godh ad true,

Can in his swadling bands controll the damned crew

XXVI.

So when the sun in bed,

Curtain'd with cloudy red, 230

Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,

The flocking shadows pale

Troops to th' infernal jail,

Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave,

And the yellow-skirted Fayses 235

Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loy
maze.

XXVII.

But see the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest,
Time is our tedious song should here have ending :
Heav'n's youngest teemed star 240
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending :
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harrest Angels sit in order serviceable.

IV.

The PASSION.

I.

Erewhile of music, and ethereal mirth,
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
And joyous news of heav'nly Infant's birth,
My Muse with Angels did divide to sing ;
But headlong joy is ever on the wing, 5
In wintry solstice like the shorten'd light
Soon swallow'd up in dark and long out-living night

II.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long, 10
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
Which he for us did freely undergo :

Most perfect Hero, try'd in heaviest plight
Of labors huge and hard, too hard for human wight !

III.

He sov'ran Priest stooping his regal head, 15
That drops with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
Poor fleshly tabernacle entered,
His starry front low-roof'd beneath the skies ;
O what a mask was there, what a disguise !

Yet more ; the stroke of death he must abide, 20
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethrens side

124 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

IV.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse,
To this horizon is my Phœbus bound ;
His Godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,
And former sufferings other where are found ; 25
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound ;
Me softer airs besit, and softer strings
Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V.

Befriend me Night, best patroness of grief,
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw, 30
And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,
That Heav'n and Earth are colour'd with my woe ;
My sorrows are too dark for day to know :
The leaves should all be black whereon I write, 34
And letters where my tears have wash'd a wannish

VI.

[white.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirl'd the prophet up at Chebar flood,
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
To bear me where the tow'rs of Salem stood,
Once glorious tow'rs, now sunk in guiltless blood ; 40
There doth my soul in holy vision sit
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.

VII.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock,
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,
And here though grief my feeble hands up lock 45
Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before ;
For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

VIII.

Or should I thence hurried on viewless wing, 50
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild,
And I (for grief is easily beguil'd)

POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 129

Might think th' infection of my sorrows loud 55
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the Author finding to be above the
years he had, when he wrote it, and nothing
satisfied with what was begun, left it un-
finish'd.

V.

On TIME.

FLY envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain, 3
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain.
For when as each thing bad thou hast intomb'd,
And last of all thy greedy self consum'd 10
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine, 15
With truth, and peace, and love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of him, t' whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heav'nly-guided soul shall clime,
Then all this earthy grossness quit, 10
Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O
[Time.

VI.

Upon the CIRCUMCISION.

YE flaming Pow'rs, and winged Warriors bright
That erst with music, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherd's ear,

126 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
 Through the soft silence of the list'ning night ; 5
 Now mourn, and if sad share with us to bear
 Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
 Burn in your sighs, and borrow
 Seas wept from our deep sorrow :
 He who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere 10
 Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease ;
 Alas, how soon our sin
 Sore doth begin
 His infancy to seize !
 O more exceeding love or law more just ? 15
 Just law indeed, but more exceeding love !
 For we by rightful doom remediless
 Were lost in death, till he that dwelt above
 High thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust
 Emptied his glory, ev'n to nakedness ; 20
 And that great covenant which we still transgress
 Entirely satisfied,
 And the full wrath beside
 Of vengeful justice bore for our excess,
 And seals obedience first with wounding smart 25
 This day, but O ere long
 Huge pangs and strong
 Will pierce more near his heart.

VII.

At a SOLEMN MUSIC.

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of Heav'n's joy,
 Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
 Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd pow'r employ
 Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce
 And to our high-rais'd phantasy present 5
 That undisturbed song of pure concent
 Ay sung before the saphir-color'd throne
 To him that sits thereon

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 127

With faintly shout, and solemn jubilee,
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row 10
Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow,
And the cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms 15
Singing everlastingly;
That we on earth with undiscording voice
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din 20
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd.
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood,
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heav'n, till God ere long
To his celestial consort us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light.

VIII.

An EPITAPH on the MARCHIONESS
of WINCHESTER.

THIS rich marble doth enter
The honor'd Wife of Winchester,
A Vicount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth, 5
More than she could own from earth,
Summers three times eight save one
She had told; alas too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death. 10
Yet had the number of her days

128 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Been as complete as was her praise,
 Nature and fate had had no strife
 In giving limit to her life.
 Her high birth, and her graces sweet
 Quickly found a lover meet ;
 The virgin quire for her request
 The God that sits at marriage feast ;
 He at their invoking came
 But with a scarce well-lighted flame,
 And in his garland as he stood,
 Ye might discern a cypress-bud.
 Once had the early matrons run
 To greet her of a lovely son,
 And now with second hope she goes,
 And calls Lucina to her throws ;
 But whether by mischance or blame
 Atropos for Lucina came ;
 And with remorseless cruelty
 Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree :
 The hapless babe before his birth
 Had burial, yet not laid in earth,
 And the languish'd mother's womb
 Was not long a living tomb.
 So have I seen some tender slip,
 Sav'd with care from winter's nip,
 The pride of her carnation train,
 Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,
 Who only thought to crop the flow'r
 New shot up from vernal show'r ;
 But the fair blossom hangs the head,
 Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
 And those pearls of dew she wears,
 Prove to be presaging tears,
 Which the sad morn had let fall
 On her hast'ning funeral.
 Gentle Lady, may thy grave
 Peace and quiet ever have ;
 After this thy travel sore

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Sweet rest seize thee evermore, 50
 That to give the world increase,
 Shortened hast thy own life's lease;
 Here, besides the sorrowing 15
 That thy noble house doth bring,
 Here be tears of perfect moan 65
 Wept for thee in Helicon,
 And some flowers, and some bays;
 For thy hearse to strow the ways,
 Sent thee from the banks of Came, 10
 Devoted to thy virtuous name;
 Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sitt'st in glory, 60
 Next her much like to thee in story,
 That fair Syrian shepherdess,
 Who after years of barrenness,
 The highly favor'd Joseph bore 65
 To him that serv'd for her before,
 And at her next birth much like thee,
 Through pangs fled to felicity,
 Far within the bosom bright
 Of blazing Majesty and Light : 70
 There with thee, new welcome Saint,
 Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
 With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
 No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

IX.

SONG. On MAY MORNING.

NOW the bright morning star, day's harbinger
 Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
 The flow'ry May, who from her green lap throws
 The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.
 Hail bounteous May that dost inspire
 Mirth and youth and warm desire;

130 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

10

X.

On SHAKESPEAR. 1630.

WHAT needs my Shakespear for his honor'd
The labor of an age in piled stones, [bones
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame, 5
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
'Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
For whilst to th' shame of slow-endavoring art 10
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And so sepulcher'd in such pomp dost lie, 15
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

XI.

On the Univerfity Carrier, who ficken'd in the time
of his vacancy, being forbid to go to London, by
reason of the plague.

HERE lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his
And here alas, hath lain him in the dirt, [girt,
Or else the way being foul, twenty to one,
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown,

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 131

'Twas such a shifter, that if truth were known,
 Death was half glad when he had got him down;
 For he had any time this ten years full,
 Dodg'd with him, betwixt Cambridge and the Bull.
 And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
 Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd;
 But lately finding him so long at home,
 And thinking now his journey's end was come,
 And that he had ta'en up his latest inn,
 In the kind office of a chamberlin
 Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,
 Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light:
 If any ask for him, it shall be said,
 Hobson has slept, and's newly gone to bed.

XII.

Another on the same.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
 That he could never die while he could move;
 So hung his destiny, never to rot
 While he might still jogg on and keep his trot,
 Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
 Until his revolution was at stay.
 Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
 'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time:
 And like an engin mov'd with wheel and weight,
 His principles being ceas'd, he ended strait.
 Rest that gives all men life, gave him his death,
 And too much breathing put him out of breath;
 Nor were it contradiction to affirm
 Too long vacation hasten'd on his term.
 Merely to drive the time away he sicken'd,
 Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd;
 Nay, quoth he, on his swooning bed out-stretch'd,
 If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd,

133 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
 For one carrier put down to make six bearers. 20
 Ease was his chief disease, and to judge right,
 He dy'd for heaviness that his cart went light;
 His leisure told him that his time was come,
 And lack of load made his life burdensome,
 That even to his last breath (there be that say't) 25
 As he were press'd to death, he cry'd more weight;
 But had his doings lasted as they were,
 He had been an immortal carrier.
 Obedient to the moon he spent his date
 In course reciprocal, and had his fate 30
 Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas,
 Yet (strange to think) his wain was his increase;
 His letters are deliver'd all and gone,
 Only remains this superscription.

XIII.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE loathed melancholy,
 Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
 In Stygian cave forlorn [holy,
 'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights un-
 Find out some uncouth cell, 5
 Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
 And the night raven sings;
 There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
 As ragged as thy locks,
 In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell. 10
 But come thou Goddess fair and free,
 In Heav'n ycleap'd Euphrosyne,
 And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
 Whom lovely Venus at a birth
 With two sister Graces more 15
 To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore;

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Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a Maying, 20
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blythe, and debonair.
Haste thee Nymph, and bring with thee 25
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek; 30
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee, 35
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprieved pleasures free; 40
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tow'r in the skies.
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow, 45
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din 50
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
 Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumb'ring morn,

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134 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

From the side of some hoar hill, 55
Through the high wood echoing shrill :
Some time walking not unseen
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate, 60
Where the great sun begins his state,
Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight,
While the plow-man near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe, 65
And the mower whets his sithe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Strait mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landskip round it measures, 70
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest, 75
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it sees
Bossom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighb'ring eyes. 80
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savory dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes, 85
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bow'r she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves ;
Or if the earlier season lead
To the tann'd haycock in the mead. 90
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,

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- 55 When the merry bells ring round,
 And the jocond rebecks found
 To many a youth, and many a maid,
 Dancing in the chequer'd shade: 95
 And young and old come forth to play
 60 On a sunshine holy-day,
 Till the live-long day-light fail;
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale, 100
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How faery Mab the junkets eat,
 65 She was pincht, and pull'd she said,
 And he by friers lanthorn led
 Tells how the drudging Goblin swet,
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 70 His shadowy flae hath thresh'd the corn,
 That ten day-lab'ers could not end;
 Then lies him down the lubbar fiend, 110
 And stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
 75 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his mattin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
 115 By whisp'ring winds soon lull'd asleep.
 Towred cities please us then,
 80 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold
 In weeds of peace high triumphs hold, 120
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes,
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 85 Of wit, or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace, whom all commend.
 There let Hymen oft appear 125
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
 90 With mask, and antique pageantry,
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer eves by haunted stream, 130

36 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS,

Then to the well-trqd stage anon,
 If Johnson's learned sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakespear, fancy's child,
 Warble his native wood-notes wild.
 And ever against eating cares,
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse,
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce
 In notes, with many a winding bout
 Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
 With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that ty
 The hidden soul of harmony;
 That Orpheus self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heapt Elysian flow'rs, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto, to have quite set free
 His half regain'd Eurydice.
 These delights, if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

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XIV.

IL PENSEROSO:

HENCE vain deluding joys,
 The brood of folly without father bred,
 How little you bested,
 Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys?
 Dwell in some idle brain,
 And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
 Or likest hovering dreams
 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus train,
 But hail thou Goddess, sage and holy,

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Hail divinest Melancholy,
 Whose faintly visage is too bright
 To hit the sense of human sight,
 And therefore to our weaker view 15
 O'er laid with black, staid wisdom's hue;
 Black, but such as in esteem
 Prince Memnon's sister might beset,
 Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
 To set her beauties praise above 20
 The Sea-Nymphs, and their pow'rs offended:
 Yet thou art higher far descended,
 Thee bright hair'd Vesta long of yore
 To solitary Saturn bore;
 His daughter she (in Saturn's reign,
 Such mixture was not held a stain). 25
 Oft in glimmering bow'rs and glades
 He met her, and in secret shades
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
 While yet there was no fear of Jove.
 Come pensive Nun, devout and pure. 30
 Sober, stedfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestic train,
 And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn. 35
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,
 With even step, and musing gait,
 And looks commercing with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes: 40
 There held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
 And join with thee calm Peace, and Qui 45
 Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Ay round about Jove's altar sing:
 And add to these retired Leisure,
 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure; 50

138 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS:

But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
 Him that yon soars on golden wing,
 Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
 The Cherub Contemplation;
 And the mute Silence hift along,
 'Less Philomel will deign a song,
 In her sweetest, saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
 While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
 Gently o'er th' accustom'd oak;
 Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy!
 Thee chauntress oft the woods among
 I woo to hear thy even-song;
 And missing thee, I walk unseen
 On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wand'ring moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 Through the Heav'n's wide pathless way,
 And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft on a plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off Curfeu found,
 Over some wide-water'd shore,
 Swinging slow with sullen roar;
 Or if the air will not permit,
 Some still removed place will fit,
 Where glowing embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the belman's drowsy charm,
 To bless the doors from nightly harm:
 Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
 Be seen in some high lonely tow'r,
 Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
 With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato to unfold
 What worlds, or what vast regions hold

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- The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook :
 And of those Demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
 55 Whose power hath a true consent
 With planet, or with element.
 Sometime let gorgeous tragedy
 In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops line,
 60 Or the tale of Troy divine,
 Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
 But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
 Might raise Musæus from his bower,
 65 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
 Such notes, as warbled to the string,
 Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
 And made Hell grant what love did seek,
 Or call up him that left half told
 70 The story of Cambuscan bold,
 Of Camball, and of Algarfise,
 And who had Canace to wife,
 That own'd the virtuous ring and glass,
 And of the wondrous horse of brass,
 75 On which the Tartar king did ride ;
 And if ought else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of turneys and of trophies hung,
 Of forests, and enchantments drear,
 80 Where more is meant than meets the ear.
 Thus night oft see me in thy pale career,
 Till civil-suited morn appear,
 Not trickt and frounted as she was wont
 With the Attic boy to hunt,
 85 But kercheft in a comely cloud,
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or usher'd with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves,
 With minute drops from off the eaves

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140 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

And when the sun begins to sing
 His flaming beams, me Goddess bring
 To arched walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown that Sylvan loves
 Of pine, or monumental oak,
 Where the rude ax with heaved stroke
 Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
 There in close covert by some brook,
 Where no profane eye may look,
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honied thie,
 That at her flow'ry work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring
 With such consort as they keep,
 Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep;
 And let some strange mysterious dream
 Wave at his wings in aery stream
 Of lively portraiture display'd,
 Softly on my eye-lids laid.
 And as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
 Or th' unseen Genius of the wood.
 But let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious cloysters pale,
 And love the high embowed roof,
 With antic pillars massy proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light.
 There let the pealing organ blow
 To the full voic'd quire below,
 In service high, and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetne's, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into extasies,
 And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes.
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 Where I may sit and rightly spell

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POEM

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Of every star that Heav'n doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures Melancholy give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

175

XV.

A R C A D E S.

Part of an entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by some noble persons of her family, who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving forward the scene of state, with this Song.

I. S O N G.

LOOK Nymphs, and Shepherds look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook:

This, this is she
To whom our vows and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.

Fame, that her high worth to raise,
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse
Of detraction from her praise;
Less than half we find express,
Envy bid conceal the rest,

Mark what radiant state she spreads,
In circle round her shining throne,
Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,

342 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Sitting like a Goddess bright,
In the center of her light.

Might she the wise Latona be,
Or the towred Cybele,
Mother of a hundred Gods :
Juno dares not give her odds ;
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparallel'd ?

As they come forward, the Genius of the wood ap-
pears, and turning toward them, speaks.

G E N I U S.

STAY gentle Swains, for though in this disguise
I see bright honor sparkle through your eyes ;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alpheus, who by secret sluice
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse ;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver-buskin'd Nymphs as great and good,
I know this quest of yours, and free intent
Was all in honor and devotion meant
To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine,
And with all helpful service will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity ;
And lead ye where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold ;
Which I full oft amidst these shades alone
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon :
For know by lot from Jove I am the Power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.

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And all my plants I save from nightly ill
 Of noisome winds, and blasting vapors chill :
 And from the boughs brush off the evil dew, 50
 And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
 Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
 Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
 When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
 Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground, 55
 And early ere the odorous breath of morn
 Awakes the slumb'ring leaves, or tassel'd horn
 Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about
 Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
 With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless ;
 But else in deep of night, when drowfiness 60
 Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
 To the celestial Sirens harmony,
 That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
 And sing to those that hold the vital shears, 65
 And turn the adamantin spindle round,
 On which the fate of Gods and men is wound.
 Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
 To lull the daughters of Necessity,
 And keep unsteady Nature to her law, 70
 And the low world in measur'd motion draw
 After the heav'nly tune, which none can hear
 Of human mold with gross unpurged ear ;
 And yet such music worthiest were to blaze 75
 The peerless highth of her immortal praise,
 Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
 If my inferior hand or voice could hit
 Inimitable sounds, yet as we go,
 Whate'er the skill of lesser Gods can show, 80
 I will assay, her worth to celebrate,
 And so attend ye toward her glittering state ;
 Where ye may all that are of noble stem
 Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem. 85

II. S O N G.

O'ER the smooth enamel'd green,
 Where no print of step hath been,
 Follow me as I sing,
 And touch the warbled string,
 Under the shady roof
 Of branching elm star-proof.
 Follow me,
 I will bring you where she sits,
 Clad in splendor as befits
 Her deity.
 Such a rural Queen
 All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. S O N G.

Nymphs and Shepherds dance no more
 By sandy Ladon's lillied banks,
 On old Lycæus or Cyllene hoar
 Trip no more in twilight ranks,
 Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
 A better soil shall give ye thanks.
 From the stony Mænalus
 Bring your flocks, and live with us,
 Here ye shall have greater grace,
 To serve the Lady of this place.
 Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
 Yet Syrinx well might wait on her,
 Such a rural Queen
 All Arcadia hath not seen.

SIONS.

XVI.

A

M A S K

PRESENTED

At LUDLOW-CASTLE, 1634.

BEFORE

The EARL of BRIDGEWATER, then President
of WALES.

The Copy of a Letter written by Sir HENRY
WOTTON, to the Author, upon the following
Poem.

From the College, this 10th of April, 1638.

SIR,

IT was a special favor, when You lately be-
" flowed upon me here the first taste of Your ac-
" quaintance, though no longer than to make me
" know, that I wanted more time to value it, and
" to enjoy it rightly. And in truth, if I could then
" have imagined Your farther stay in these parts,
" which I understood afterwards by Mr. H. I
" would have been bold, in our vulgar phrase, to
" mend my draught, for You left me with an ex-
" treme thirst, and to have begged your conversati-
" on again jointly with Your said learned friend, at
" a poor meal or two, that we might have banded
" together some good authors of the ancient time,
" among which I observed You to have been fa-
" miliar.

" Since Your going, You have charged me with
" new obligations, both for a very kind letter from
" You, dated the six h of this month, and for a dain-
" ty piece of entertainment, that came therewith
" wherein I should much commend the tragica
" part, if the lyrical did not raviish with a certain
" Doric delicacy in Your songs and odes, where
" in I must plainly confels to have seen yet nothing
" parallel in our language, Ipsa mollities. But
" must not omit to tell You, that I now only ow
" You thanks for intimating unto me, how mo
" destly soever, the true artificer. For the wor
" itseif I had view'd some good while before wit
" singular delight, having received it from o

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HENRY
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1638.

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" common friend Mr. R. in the very close of the
" late R's poems printed at Oxford; whereunto it is
" added, as I now suppose, that the accessory might
" help out the principal, according to the art of
" stationers, and leave the reader con la bocca
" dolce.

" Now, Sir, concerning Your travels, wherein
" I may challenge a little more privilege of dis-
" course with you; I suppose, you will not blanch
" Paris in Your way. Therefore I have been bold
" to trouble You with a few lines to Mr. M. B.
" whom you shall easily find attending the young
" Lord S. as his governor; and You may surely
" receive from him good directions for shaping off
" Your farther journey into Italy, where he did
" reside by my choice some time for the king, after
" mine own recess from Venice.

" I should think, that Your best line will be
" thro' the whole length of France to Marseilles,
" and thence by sea to Genoa, whence the passage
" into Tuscany is as diurnal as a Gravesend barge.
" I hasten, as You do, to Florence or Sienna, the
" rather to tell You a short story, from the interest
" You have given me in Your safety.

" At Sienna I was tabled in the house of one
" Alberto Scipione, an old Roman courtier in dan-
" gerous times, having been steward to the Duca
" di Pagliano, who with all his family were stran-
" gled, save this only man, that escaped by fore-
" sight of the tempest. With him I had often
" much chat of those affairs; into which he took
" pleasure to look back from his native harbour;
" and at my departure toward Rome, which had
" been the center of his experience, I had won con-
" fidence enough to beg his advice, how I might
" carry myself securely there, without offense of
" others, or of my own conscience: Signor Arri-
" go meo, says he, i pensieri suetti, & il viso sci-

"olto, that is, Your thoughts close, and your
 "countenance loose, will go safely over the whole
 "world. Of which Delphian oracle (for so I
 "have found it) Your judgment doth need no
 "commentary; and therefore, Sir, I will com-
 "mit You with it to the best of all securities
 "God's dear love remaining Your friend, as much
 "at command as any of longer date.

H. Wotton.

P. S. "Sir, I have expressly sent this by my
 "foot-boy to prevent Your departure, without
 "some acknowledgment from me of the receipt of
 "Your obliging letter, having myself thro' some
 "business, I know not how, neglected the ordi-
 "nary conveyance. In any part where I shall
 "understand You fixed, I shall be glad and dili-
 "gent to entertain You with home-novelties, even
 "for some sementation of our friendship, too soon
 "interrupted in the cradle."

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The Mask was presented in 1634, and consequent-
ly in the 26th year of our author's age. In the
title page of the first edition printed in 1637, it
is said that it was presented on Michaelmas night,
and there was this motto,

*Eheu quid volui misero mihi! floribus austrum
Perditus.-----*

In this edition, and in that of Milton's poems in
1645, there was prefixed to the Mask, the follow-
ing dedication.

To the Right Honorable

JOHN Lord VICOUNT BRACKLY, son and heir appar-
ent to the Earl of BRIDGEWATER, &c,

My LORD,

THIS poem, which received its first occa-
sion of birth from yourself and others of your noble
family, and much honor from your own person in
the performance, now returns again to make a final
dedication of itself to you. Although not openly
acknowledg'd by the author, yet it is a legitimate
offspring, so lovely, and so much desired, that the
often copying of it hath tir'd my pen to give my se-
veral friends satisfaction, and brought me to a ne-
cessity of producing it to the public view; and now
to offer it up in all rightful devotion to those fair
hopes, and rare endowments of your much pro-
mising youth, which give a full assurance, to all
that know you, of a future excellence. Live sweet
Lord to be the honor of your name, and receive this
as your own, from the hands of him, who hath by
many favors been oblig'd to your most honor'd
parents, and as in this representation your attendant
Thyrsis, so now in all real expression

Your faithful and most

humble Servant,

G, 3

H. LAWES;

THE PERSONS.

The attendant SPIRIT, afterwards in the
habit of THYRSIS.

COMUS with his crew.

The LADY.

First BROTHER.

Second BROTHER.

SABRINA the Nymph.

The chief Persons who presented were,

The Lord BRACKLY.

Mr. THOMAS EGERTON his brother.

The Lady ALICE EGERTON.

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A M A S K.

The first Scene discovers a wild wood.

The attendant Spirit descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court,
 My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
 Of bright aerial Spirits live inspher'd
 In regions mild of calm and serene air,
 Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot, 5
 Which men call Earth, and with low thoughted care
 Confin'd, and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
 Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
 Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives
 After this mortal change to her true servants 10
 Among the enthron'd Gods on sainted seats.
 Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
 To lay their just hands on that golden key,
 That opes the palace of eternity:
 To such my errand is; and but for such, 15
 I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
 With the rank vapors of this sin-worn mold.
 But to my task. Neptune besides the sway
 Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
 Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove 20
 Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
 That like to rich and various gems in'ay
 The unadorned bosom of the deep,
 Which he to grace his tributary Gods
 By course commits to several government, 25
 And gives them leave to wear their saphir crowns,
 And wield their little tridents; but this Ile,

152 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS,

The greatest and the best of all the main,
 He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;
 And all this tract that fronts the falling sun 30
 A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
 Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
 An old, and haughty nation proud in arms:
 Where his fair offspring nurs'd in princely lore
 Are coming to attend their father's state, 35
 And new-intrusted scepter; but their way
 Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
 The nodding horror of whose shady brows
 Threats the forlorn and wand'ring passenger;
 And here their tender age might suffer peril, 40
 But that by quick command from sovran Jove
 I was dispatch'd for their defense and guard:
 And listen why, for I will tell you now
 What never yet was heard in tale or song,
 From old or modern bard, in hall or bower. 45

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
 Crush'd the sweet poison of mis-used wine,
 After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
 Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds list'd,
 On Circe's island fell: (Who knows not Circe 50
 The daughter of the sun? whose charmed cup
 Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
 And downward fell into a groveling swine)
 This Nymph that gaz'd upon his clustring locks,
 With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth, 55
 Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
 Much like his father, but his mother more,
 Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd,
 Who ripe, and frolic of his full-grown age,
 Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields, 60
 At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
 And in thick shelter of black shades imbowl'd
 Excels his mother at her mighty art,
 Offering to every weary traveller,
 His orient liquor in a crystal glass, 65

POEMS

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 153

To quench the drouth of Phœbus, which as they taste'
 (For most do taste through fond intemp'rate thirst)
 Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
 Th' express resemblance of the Gods, is chang'd
 Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear, 70
 Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
 All other parts remaining as they were;
 And they, so perfect is their misery,
 Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
 But boast themselves more comely than before, 75
 And all their friends and native home forget,
 To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
 Therefore when any favor'd of high Jove
 Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
 Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star 80
 I shoot from Heav'n, to give him safe convoy,
 As now I do: But first I must put off
 These my sky robes spun out of Iris woof,
 And take the weeds and likeness of a swain,
 That to the service of this house belongs, 85
 Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
 Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
 And hush the waving woods, nor of less faith,
 And in this office of his mountain watch,
 Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid 90
 Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
 Of hateful steps, I must be viewless now.

Comus enters with a charming rod in one hand, his
 glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters,
 headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but other-
 wise like men and women, their apparel glister-
 ing; they come in making a riotous and unruly
 noise, with torches in their hands.

COMUS. The star that bids the shepherd fold,
 Now the top of Heav'n doth hold,
 And the gilded car of day
 His glowing axle doth allay 95

154 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

In the steep Atlantic stream,
 And the slope sun his upward beam
 Shoots against the dusky pole,
 Pacing toward the other goal,
 Of his chamber in the east. 100
 Mean while welcome Joy, and Feast,
 Midnight Shout, and Revelry,
 Topsy Dance, and Jollity.
 Braid your locks with rosy twine;
 Dropping odors, dropping wine. 105
 Rigor now is gone to bed,
 And Advice with scrupulous head,
 Strict Age, and sour Severity
 With their grave saws in slumber lie.
 We that are of purer fire 110
 Imitate the starry quire,
 Who in their nightly watchful spheres,
 Lead in swift round the months and years.
 The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
 Now to the moon in wavering morrice move, 116
 And on the tawny sands and shelves
 Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.
 By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
 The Wood-Nymphs deck'd with daisies trim, 120
 Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:
 What hath night to do with sleep?
 Night hath better sweets to prove,
 Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
 Come let us our rites begin, 125
 'Tis only day-light that makes sin,
 Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
 Hail Goddess of nocturnal sport,
 Dark-veil'd Cotytto, t'whom the secret flame
 Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame, 130
 That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb
 Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,
 And makes one blot of all the air,
 Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
 Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend 135

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 155

Us thy vow'd Priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out,
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice morn on th' Indian steep
From her cabin'd loophole peep,
And to the tell-tale sun descry
Our conceal'd solemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round.

The Measure.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds, within the brakes and trees
Our number may affright : Some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains ; I shall ere long
Be well-stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
Of pow'r to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight,
Which must not be, for that's against my course ;
I under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well plac'd words of glozing courtesy
Baited with reasons not unplaussible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes, I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The Lady enters.

This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now ; methought it was the sound

156 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS,

Of riot and ill manag'd merriment,
 Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe
 Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
 When for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
 In wain on dance they praise the bounteous Pan, 176
 And thank the Gods amiss. I should be loath
 To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence
 Of such late wassailers; yet O where else
 Shall I inform my unacquainted feet 180
 In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
 My Brothers, when they saw me wearied out
 With this long way, resolving here to lodge
 Under the spreading favor of these pines,
 Stept, as they said, to the next thickset side 185
 To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
 As the kind hospitable woods provide,
 They left me then, when the grey-hooded Even,
 Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
 Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain. 190
 But where they are, and why they came not back,
 Is now the labor of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
 They had engag'd their wand'ring steps too far,
 And envious darkness, ere they could return,
 Had stole them from me; else O thievish Night 195
 Why should'st thou, but for some felonious end,
 In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
 That nature hung in Heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
 With everlasting oil, to give due light
 To the missed and lonely traveller? 200
 This is the place, as well as I may guess,
 Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
 Was rise, and perfect in my list'ning ear.
 Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
 What might this be? A thousand fantasies 205
 Begin to throng into my memory,
 Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,
 And aery tongues, that syllable mens names
 On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.

POEMS

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 157

These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
 The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended 211
 By a strong siding champion, conscience.---
 O welcome pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering Angel girt with golden wings,
 And thou unblemish'd form of Chastity; 215
 I see ye visibly, and now believe
 That he, the Supreme Good, t'whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glitt'ring guardian if need were 220
 To keep my life and honor unassail'd.
 Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
 I did not err, there does a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
 And casts a gleam over this tufted grove, 225
 I cannot halloo to my Brothers, but
 Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
 I'll venture, for my new inliven'd spirits
 Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

S O N G.

SWEET Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
 Within thy aery shell, 231
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet embroider'd vale,
 Where the love-lorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well; 238
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
 That likest thy Narcissus are?
 O if thou have
 Hid them in some flow'ry cave, 240
 Tell me but where,
 Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere,
 So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
 And give resounding grace to all Heav'n's harmonies,
 COMUS. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mold
 Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment? 245

158 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
 And with these raptures moves the vocal air
 To testify his hidden residence:
 How sweetly did they flote upon the wings
 Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night, 250
 At every fall smoothing the raven down
 Of darkness till it smil'd! I have oft heard
 My mother Circe with the Syrens three,
 Amidst the flowry-kirtled Naiades
 Culling their potent herbs, and baleful drugs, 255
 Who as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
 And lap it in Elysium; Scylla wept,
 And chid her barking waves into attention,
 And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
 Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense, 260
 And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;
 But such a sacred, and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking bliss
 I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
 And she shall be my queen. Hail foreign wonder,
 Whom certain these rough shades did never breed, 266
 Unless the Goddess that in rural shrine
 Dwell'st here with Pan, or Silvan, by blest song
 Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
 To touch the prosp'rous growth of this tall wood. 270

LADY. Nay gentle Shepherd, ill is lost that praise
 That is address'd to unattending ears;
 Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
 How to regain my sever'd company,
 Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo 275
 To give me answer from her mossy couch.

COM. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you
 thus?

LADY. Dim darkness, and this lea'y labyrinth.

COM. Could that divide you from near-usher'd
 guides?

LADY. They left me weary on a grassy turf. 280

COM. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

POE

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 159

LADY. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly
spring.

COM. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

LADY. They were but twain, and purpos' quick
return.

COM. Perhaps fore-stalling night prevented them.

LADY. How easy my misfortune is to hit! 286

COM. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

LADY. None's than if I should my Brothers lose.

COM. Were they of manly prime, or youthful
bloom? 289

LADY. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

COM. Two such I saw, what time the labor'd ox

In his loose traces from the furrow came,

And the swinkt hedger at his supper sat;

I saw them under a green mantling vine

That crawls along the side of yon small hill, 295

Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;

Their port was more than human, as they stood:

I took it for a faery vision

Of some gay creatures of the element,

That in the colours of the rainbow live, 300

And play i' th' plighted clouds. I was aw-struck,

And as I pass'd, I worshipt; if those you seek,

It were a journey like the path to Heaven,

To help you find them. LA. Gentle Villager,

What readiest way would bring me to that place? 305

COM. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

LADY. To find out that, good Shepherd, I suppose.

In such a scant-allowance of star-light,

Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,

Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet. 310

COM. I know each lane, and every alley green,

Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,

And every busky bourn from side to side,

My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;

And if your stray-attendance be yet lodg'd,

Or shroud within these limits, I shall know 315

160 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Ere morrow wake, or the low roosted lark
 From her thatcht pallat rouse; if otherwise
 I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
 But loyal cottage, where you may be safe 320
 Till further quest. L.A. Shepherd, I take thy word,
 And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
 Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
 With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
 And courts of princes, where it first was nam'd, 325
 And yet is most pretended: In a place
 Less warranted than this, or less secure,
 I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
 Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
 To my proportion'd strength. Shepherd, lead on,

The two Brothers.

1. ELD. BRO. Unmuffle ye faint stars, and thou fair
 Moon,
 That wont'st to love the traveller's benizon,
 Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
 And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
 In double night of darkness, and of shades; 335
 Or if your influence be quite damm'd up
 With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
 Though a rush candle (from the wicker hole
 Of some clay habitation, visit us
 With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light. 340
 And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
 Or Tyrian Cynosure. 2. BRO. Or if our eyes
 Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
 The folded flocks penn'd in their watled cotes,
 Or sound of past'ral reed with eaten stops, 345
 Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
 Count the night watches to his feathery dams,
 'Twould be some solace yet, some little chearing
 In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs,
 But O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister, 350

POE

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 2. BRO. "
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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 162

Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm 354
Leans her unpillow'd head fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement, and affright,
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

ELD. BRO. Peace, Brother, be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils; 360

For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion? 365

I do not think my Sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not) 370
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into mis-becoming plight.

Virtue could see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And wisdom's self 375
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,

Where with her best nurse contemplation
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd. 380

He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i'th' center, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

2. BRO. 'Tis most true, 385
That musing meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,

162 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Far from the chearful haunt of men and herds,
 And sits as safe as in a senate house;
 For who would rob a hermit of his weeds, 390
 His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
 Or do his gray hairs any violence?
 But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
 Of dragon-watch with uninchantèd eye, 395
 To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit
 From the rash hand of bold incontinence.
 You may as well spread out the unshunn'd heaps
 Of misers treasure by an out-law's den,
 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope 400
 Danger will wink on opportunity,
 And let a single helpless maiden pass
 Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
 Of night, or loneliness it recks me not;
 I fear the dread events that dog them both, 405
 Lest some ill greeting touch attempt the person
 Of our unowned sister.

ELD. BRO. I do not, Brother,
 Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
 Secure without all doubt, or controversy:
 Yet where an equal poise of hope and fear 410
 Does arbitrate th'event, my nature is
 That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
 And gladly banish squint suspicion.
 My Sister is not so defenseless left
 As you imagin; she' has a hidden strength 415
 Which you remember not.

2. BRO. What hidden strength,
 Unless the strength of Heav'n, if you mean that

ELD. BRO. I mean that too, but yet a hidden
 strength,

Which if Heav'n gave it, may be term'd her own
 'Tis chastity, my Brother, chastity:
 She that has that, is clad in complete steel,

POE

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 163

And like a quiver'd nymph wi h arrows keen
 May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
 Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds,
 Where through the sacred rays of chastity, 425
 No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaneer
 Will dare to soil her virgin purity :
 Yea there, where very desolation dwells
 By grotts, and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
 She may pass on with unble ch'd majesty, 430
 Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
 Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
 In fog, or fire, by lake, or moorish fen,
 Blue meager hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
 That breaks his magic chains at Curieu time, 435
 No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,
 Hath hurtful pow'r o'er true virginity.
 Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
 Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
 To testify the arms of chastity ? 440
 Hence had the huntreis Dian her dread bow,
 Fair silver shafted queen, for ever chaste,
 Wherewith she tarr'd the brinded lioness
 And spotted mounta n pard, but set at nought
 The frivolous bolt o' Cupid ; Gods and men 445
 Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' th' woods.
 What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
 That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
 Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
 But rigid looks of chaste austerity, 450
 And noble grace that dash'd brute violence
 With sudden adoration, and blank awe ?
 So dear to Heav'n is faintly chastity,
 That when a soul is found sincerely so,
 A thousand lveried Ange's lacky her, 455
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
 And in clear dream, and solemn vision,
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,
 Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants

164 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape, 460
 The unpolluted temple of the mind,
 And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
 Till all be made immortal: but when lust,
 By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
 But most by leud and lavish act of sin, 465
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
 The soul grows clotted by contagion,
 Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
 The divine property of her first being.
 Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp 470
 Oft seen in charnel vaults, and sepulchers,
 Ling'ring, and sitting by a new made grave,
 As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
 And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
 To a degenerate and degraded state. 475

2. BRO. How charming is divine philosophy!
 Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
 But musical as is Apollo's lute,
 And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
 Where no crude surfeit reigns. ELD. BRO. Lift,
 lift, I hear

Some far off hallow break the silent air.

2. BRO. Methought so too; what should it be?
 ELD. BRO. For certain

Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
 Or else some neighbour wood-man, or, at worst,
 Some roving robber calling to his fellows. 485

2. BRO. Heav'n keep my Sister. Again, again,
 and near;

Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

ELD. BRO. I'll hallow;
 If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
 Defense is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

The attendant Spirit, habited like a shepherd.
 That hallow I should know, what are you? speak;
 Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else, 491

POE

SPIR.

2 BRO.

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 166

SPIR. What voice is that? my young lord?
speak again.

2 BRO. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.

ELD. BRO. Thyrsis? whose artful strains have
oft delay'd

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal 495

And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale.

How cam'st thou here, good Swain; hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling weather the pent flock forsook?

How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook?

SPIR. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy

As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth

Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth

That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought

To this my errand, and the care it brought. 506

But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?

How chance she is not in your company?

ELD. BRO. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, with-
out blame,

Or our neglect, we lost her as we came. 510

SPIR. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true?

ELD. BRO. What fears, good Thyrsis, Prethee
briefly shew.

SPIR. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous,
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance)

What the sage poets, taught by th' heav'nly Muse,
Story'd of old in high immortal verse, 516

Of dire chimera's and enchanted isles,

And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell;

For such there be, but unbelief is blind.

Within the navel of this hideous wood, 520

Immur'd in cypress shades a forcerer dwells,

Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,

Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries,

And here to every thirsty wanderer

By sly enticement gives his baneful cup. 526

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166 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
 The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
 And the inglorious likeness of a beast,
 Fixes instead, unmolding reason's mintage
 Character'd in the face; this have I learnt 530
 Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts,
 That brow this bottom glade, whence night by night
 He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
 Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
 Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
 In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers
 Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells,
 To inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
 Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
 This evening late, by then th' chewing flocks 540
 Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
 Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
 I sat me down to watch upon a bank
 With ivy canopied, and interwove
 With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
 Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
 To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
 Till fancy had her fill, but ere a close
 The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
 And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance; 550
 At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them a while,
 Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
 Gave respite to the drowsy flighted flocks,
 That draw the litter of close-curtain'd sleep;
 At last a soft and solemn breathing sound
 Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
 And stole upon the air, that even Silence
 Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
 Deny her nature, and be never more
 Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear
 And took in strains that might create a soul
 Under the ribs of death: but O ere long
 Too well I did perceive it was the voice

POEM

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 167

Of my most honour'd lady, your dear Sister.
 Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear, 565
 And O poor hapless nightingale thought I,
 How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
 Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
 Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
 Till guided by mine ear I found the place 570
 Where that damn'd wizard hid in sly disguise
 (For so by certain signs I knew) had met
 A ready, ere my best speed could prevent,
 The aidless innocent Lady his wish'd prey,
 Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two, 575
 Supposing him some neighbour villager.
 Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
 Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
 Into swift flight, till I had found you here,
 But further know I not. 2. BRO. O night and
 shades,
 How are ye join'd with hell in triple knot, 581
 Against th' unarm'd weakness of one virgin
 Alone, and helpless: Is this the confidence
 You gave me, Brother? ELB. BRO. Yes, and
 keep it still,
 Lean on it safely; not a period 585
 Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
 Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
 Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,
 Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
 Surpris'd by unjust force, but not int'all'd; 590
 Yea, even that which mischief meant most harm,
 Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
 But evil on itself shall back recoil,
 And mix no more with goodness, when at last
 Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself. 595
 It shall be in eternal restless change
 Self-fed, and self-consumed: if this fail,
 The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
 And earth's base built on stubble. But come let's on,

168 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Against th' opposing will and arm of Heaven 608
 May never this just sword be lifted up ;
 But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
 With all the grisly legions that troop
 Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
 Harpyes and Hydra's, or all the monstrous forms 609
 'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
 And force him to restore his purchase back,
 Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
 Curs'd as his life.

SPIR. Alas ! good ventrous Youth,
 I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise ; 610
 But here thy sword can do thee little stead ;
 Far other arms, and other weapons must
 Be those that quell the might of hellish charms :
 He with his bare wand can unthred thy joints,
 And crumble all thy sinews.

ELD. BRO. Why prethee, Shepherd, 615
 How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
 As to make this relation.

SPIR. Care and utmost shifts
 How to secure the Lady from surprizal,
 Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
 Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd 620
 In every virtuous plant and healing herb,
 That spreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray :
 He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing,
 Which when I did, he on the tender grass
 Would sit, and hearken even to extasy, 625
 And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
 And show me simples of a thousand names,
 Telling their strange and vigorous faculties :
 Amongst the rest, a small unsightly root,
 But of divine effect, he cull'd me out ; 630
 The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flow'r, but not in this soil :
 Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain

POEM

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 chair, to
 puts by,

COM. N
 Your nerves
 And you a
 Root-bound

POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 169

Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;
 And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
 He call'd it Hæmony, and gave it me,
 And bad me keep it as of sovran use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
 Or ghastly furies apparition. 644
 I purs'd it up, but little reck'ning made,
 Till now that this extremity compell'd:
 But now I find it true; for by this means
 I knew the foul inchanter, though disguis'd, 645
 Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,
 And yet came off: if you have this about you,
 (As I will give you when we go) you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood, 650
 And brandish'd blade rush on him, break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
 But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
 Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
 Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke, 655
 Yet they will soon retire, if he but shrink.

ELD. BRO. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow
 thee,

And some good Angel bear a shield before us.

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with
 all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables
 spread with all dainties. Comus appears with
 his rabble, and the Lady set in an enchanted
 chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she
 puts by, and goes about to rise.

Com. Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
 Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster, 660
 And you a statue, or as Daphne was
 Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

170 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

LADY. Fool, do not boast,
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind,
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacl'd, while Heav'n sees good. 66

Com. Why are you vex'd, Lady? why do you
frown?

Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: See here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns 67
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames, and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spi'rits of balm, and fragrant syrups mix'd.
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone 657
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst:
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs which nature lent 68
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal like an ill borrower
With that which you receiv'd on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition 68
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.

LADY. 'Twill not, false traitor, 69
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
Thou toldst me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me! 69
Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, soul deceivers
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence,

POI

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 171

With visor'd falshood, and base forgery?
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish baits fit to insnare a brute? 706
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none
But such as are good men can give good things,
And that which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite. 709

COM. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic sur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and fallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth, 710
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odors, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please; and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning-worms, 713
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd
filk

To deck her sons, and that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutcht th' all-worshipt ore, and precious gems
To store her children with: if all the world 720
Should in a pet of temp'rance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' all-giver would be unthank'd; would be un-
prais'd,

Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd,
And we should serve him as a grudging master, 723
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own
weight,

And strangled with her waste fertility,
Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air darkt with
plumes, 726
The herds would over-multitude their lords,

172 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

The sea o'erfraught would swell, and th' unfought
diamonds

Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last 735
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows,
Lift Lady, be not coy, and be not cosen'd
With that same vaunted name Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current, and the good thereof 740
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unfavor in th' enjoyment of itself;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown 745
In courts, in feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply 750
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wooll.
What need a vermeil tinctur'd lip for that,
Love darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts, 754
Think what and be advis'd, you are but young yet.

LADY. I had not thought to have unlockt my
lips

In this unhallow'd air, but that this jugler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules prankt in reason's garb.
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments, 760
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor, do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous,
With her abundance; she good caterers
Means her provision only to the good, 765
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare temperance:

POEM

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

If every just man, that now pines with want,
 Had but a moderate and beſeeming ſhare
 Of that which lewdly pamper'd luxury
 Now heaps upon ſome few with vaſt exceſs,
 Nature's full bleſſings would be well diſpens'd
 In unſuperfluous even proportion,
 And ſhe no whit incumber'd with her ſtore,
 And then the giver would be better thank'd, 753
 His praiſe due paid; for ſwiniſh gluttony
 Ne'er looks to Heav'n amidſt his gorgeous feaſt,
 But with beſotted baſe ingratitude
 Crams, and blaſphemes his feeder. Shall I go on?
 Or have I ſaid enough? To him that dares 780
 Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
 Againſt the ſun-clad pow'r of Chaſtity,
 Fain would I ſomething ſay, yet to what end?
 Thou haſt nor ear, nor ſoul to apprehend
 The ſublime notion, and high myſtery, 785
 That muſt be utter'd to unfold the ſage
 And ſerious doctrin of Virginity,
 And thou art worthy that thou ſhould'ſt not know
 More happineſs than this thy preſent lot.
 Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric, 790
 That hath ſo well been taught her dazzling fence.
 Thou art not fit to hear thyſelf convinc'd,
 Yet ſhould I try, the uncontrolled worth
 Of this pure cauſe would kindle my rapt ſpirits
 To ſuch a flame of ſacred vehemence, 795
 That dumb things would be mov'd to ſympathize,
 And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and
 ſhake,
 Till all thy magic ſtructures rear'd ſo high,
 Were ſhatter'd into heaps o'er thy falſe head.
 Com. She fables not, I feel that I do fear 800
 Her words ſet off by ſome ſuperior power;
 And though not mortal, yet a cold ſhu dd'ring dew
 Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
 Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus

174 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble, 805
 And try her yet more strongly. Come, no more,
 This is mere moral babble, and direct
 Against the canon laws of our foundation;
 I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
 And settlings of a melancholy blood: 810
 But this will cure all strait, one sip of this
 Will bathe the dropping spirits with delight,
 Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

The Brothers rush in with swords drawn, wrest his
 glass out of his hand, and break it against the
 ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but
 are all driven in: The attendant Spirit comes in,

SPR. What have you let the false inchanter
 scape?

O ye mistook, ye should have snatcht his wand 815
 And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
 And backward mutters of dislevering power,
 We cannot free the Lady that sits here
 In stony fetters fix'd and motionless:
 Yet stay, be not disturbed; now I bethink me 820
 Some other means I have which may be us'd,
 Which once of Melibæus old I learnt,
 The soothest shepherd that e'er pip'd on plains.

There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
 That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn
 stream,

Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure; 816
 Whilome she was the daughter of Loqrine,
 That had the scepter from his father Brute.
 She guileless damsel flying the mad pursuit
 Of her enrag'd stepdame Guendolen, 830
 Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
 That stay'd her flight with his cross-flowing course.
 The water nymphs that in the bottom play'd,

POEM

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 175

Held up their pearled wrists and took her in,
 Bearing her strait to aged Nereus hall, 832
 Who piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
 And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
 In nectar'd lavers strow'd with asphodil,
 And through the porch and inlet of each sense
 Dropt in ambrosial oils till she reviv'd, 840
 And underwent a quick immortal change,
 Made Goddess of the river; still she retains
 Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
 Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
 Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs 848
 That the shrewd meddling else delights to make,
 Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals.
 For which the shepherds at their festivals
 Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
 And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream 850
 Of pancies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
 And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
 The clasping charm, and thaw the numming
 spell,
 If she be right invok'd in warbled song,
 For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift 858
 To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
 In hard-besetting need; this will I try
 And add the pow'r of some adjuring verse,

S O N G.

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou ert sitting 860
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lillies knitting
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
 Listen for dear honor's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake, 865
 Listen and save.

276 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Listen and appear to us
 In name of great Oceanus,
 By th'earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
 And Tethys grave majestic pace,
 By hoary Nereus wrinkled look,
 And the Carpathian wisard's hook,
 By scaly Triton's winding shell,
 And old sooth-saying Glaucus spell,
 By Leucothea's lovely hands,
 And her son that rules the strands,
 By Thetis tinsel-slipper'd feet,
 And the songs of Sirens sweet,
 By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
 And fair Ligea's golden comb,
 Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
 Sleeking her soft alluring locks,
 By all the nymphs that nightly dance
 Upon thy streams with wily glance,
 Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
 From thy coral-paven bed,
 And bridle in thy headlong wave,
 Till thou our summons answer'd have:
 Listen and save.

Sabrina rises; attended by water-nymphs, and sings.

By the rusby-fringed bank,
 Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
 My sliding chariot stays,
 Thick set with agat, and the azure sheen
 Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
 That in the channel strays;
 Whilst from off the waters fleet
 Thus I set my printless feet
 O'er the cowslips velvet head,
 That bends not as I tread;
 Gentle Swain, at thy request
 am here,

POEM

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 177

SPIR. Goddess dear,
We implore thy pow'rful hand
To undo the charmed band,
Of true virgin here distressed,
Through the force, and through the wile
Of unblest inchanter vile.

905

SAB. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help insnared chastity :

Brightest Lady, look on me ;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast

910

Drops that from my fountain pure

I have kept of precious cure,

Thrice upon thy fingers tip,

Thrice upon thy rubied lip ;

915

Next this marble venom'd seat,

Smear'd with gums of glutenous heat,

I touch with chaste palms moist and cold :

Now the spell hath lost his hold ;

And I must haste ere morning hour

920

To wait in Amphitrite's bow'r.

Sabrina descends, and the Lady rises out of
her seat.

and

SPIR. Virgin, daughter of Loctrine

Sprung of old Anchises line,

May thy brimmed waves for this

Their full tribute never miss

925

From a thousand petty rills,

That tumble down the snowy hills :

Summer drouth, or singed air

Never scorch thy tresses fair,

Nor wet October's torrent flood

930

Thy molten crystal fill with mud ;

May thy billows roll ashore

The beryl, and the golden ore ;

May thy lofty head be crown'd

With many a tow'r and terras round,

935

178 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS,

And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrhe, and cinnamon.

Come, Lady, while Heav'n lends us grace,

Let us fly this cursed place,

Lest the sorcerer us entice

949

With some other new device.

Not a waste, or needless sound,

Till we come to holier ground;

I shall be your faithful guide

Through this gloomy covert wide,

945

And not many furlongs, thence

Is your Father's residence,

Where this night are met in state

Many a friend to gratulate

His wish'd presence, and beside

950

All the swains that near abide,

With jigs, and rural dance resort;

We shall catch them at their sport,

And our sudden coming there

Will double all their mirth and cheer;

955

Come let us haste, the stars grow high,

But night fits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and
the President's castle; then come in country dan-
cers, after them the attendant Spirit, with the
two Brothers and the Lady.

S O N G.

SPIR. Back, Shepherds, back, enough your play,

Till next sun shine holiday;

Here be without duck or nod

960

Other trippings to be trod

Of lighter toes, and such court guise

As Mercury did first devise

With the mingling Dryades

On the lawns, and on the leas.

965

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 179

This second Song presents them to their Father
and Mother.

949 Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight,
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own ;
Heav'n hath timely try'd their youth, 974
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
945 With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly, and intemperance. 975

959 The dances ended, the Spirit epiloguizés,

SPIR. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie;
Where day never shuts his eye,
965 Up in the broad fields of the sky :
There I suck the liquid air 980
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree :
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocond Spring, 985
The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring ;
That there eternal Summer dwells,
And west-winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling 990
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow 995
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue,
Than her purpled scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew
965 (Lift mortals, if your ears be true)

180 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound. 1000

In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen;
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid her sam'd son advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet intranc'd, 1005
After her wand'ring labors long,
Till free consent the Gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unpotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born, 1010
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.

But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend, 1015
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.

Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free,
She can teach ye how to clime
Higher than the sphery chime; 1020
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heav'n itself would stoop to her.

LYCI.

POE

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XVII.

LYCIDAS.

In this monody the author bewails a learned friend.
unfortunately down'd in his passage from Chester
on the Irish seas, 1637, and by occasion foretels
the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their
highth.

YET once more, O ye Laurels, and once more
Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never sere
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forc'd fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year. 5
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew 10
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not stote upon his watry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well, 15
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favor my destin'd urn, 20
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd 25
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,

182 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS,

We drove a field, and both together heard
 What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
 Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
 Oft till the star that rose, at evening, bright. 30
 Tow'ard Heaven's descent had stop'd his west'ring
 Mean while the rural ditties were not mute, [wheel,
 'Temper'd to th' oaten flute,
 Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with cloven heel
 From the glad sound would not be absent long, 35
 And old Damætas lov'd to hear our song.

But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
 Now thou art gone, and never must return!
 Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
 With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
 And all their echoes mourn. 41
 The willows, and the hazel copses green,
 Shall now no more be seen,
 Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
 As killing as the canker to the rose, 45
 Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flow'rs, that their gay wardrobe wear,
 When first the white-thorn blows;
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
 Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas? 51
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,
 Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wisard stream: 55
 Ay me! I fondly dream
 Had ye been there, for what could that have done?
 What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
 The Muse herself for her enchanting son,
 Whom universal nature did lament, 60
 When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
 His goary visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
 Alas! What boots it with incessant care

POEM

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POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 183

To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade, 65

And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?

Were it not better done as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,

Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?

Fame is the spur that the clear spi'rit doth raise 70

(That last infirmity of noble mind)

To scorn delights, and live laborious days;

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,

And think to burst out into sudden blaze,

Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears, 75

And slits the thin spun life. But not the praise,

Phœbus reply'd, and touch'd my trembling ears;

Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,

Nor in the glist'ring foil

Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumor lies, 80

But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,

And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;

As he pronounces lastly on each deed,

Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honor'd flood, 85

Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,

That strain I heard was of a higher mood:

But now my oat proceeds,

And listens to the herald of the sea

That came in Neptune's plea; 90

He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the fellon winds,

What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?

And question'd every gust of rugged winds

That blows from off each beaked promontory;

They knew not of his story, 95

And sage Hippotades their answer brings,

That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd,

The air was calm, and on the level brine

Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.

It was that fatal and perfidious bark 100

Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,

That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

184 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

Next Camus, reverend fire, went footing slow,
 His manile hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge 105
 Like to that sanguin flow'r inscrib'd with woe.
 Ah! Who hath rest (quoth he) my dearest pledge?
 Last came, and last did go,
 The pilot of the Galilean lake,
 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain, 11
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain)
 He shook his miter'd locks, and stern bespake,
 How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
 Enow of such as for their bellies sake
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold? 115
 Of other care they little reck'ning make,
 Than how to scramble at the sheapers feast,
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest; [hold
 Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to
 A sheep-hook, or have learn'd ought else the least
 That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
 What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
 And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
 Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed, 125
 But swoll'n with wind, and the rank mist they draw.
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
 Daily devours apace, and nothing said,
 But that two-handed engin at the door 130
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.

Return Alpheus, the dead voice is past,
 That shrunk thy streams; return Sicilian Muse.
 And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
 Their bells, and flourets of a thousand hues. 135
 Ye Valleys low, where the mild whispers use
 Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
 On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
 Throw hither all your quaint enamel'd eyes,
 That on the green turf suck the honied showers,

POEM

And purp
 Bring the
 The tufted
 The white
 The glowin
 The musk-
 With cow
 And every
 Bid amaran
 And daffad
 To strow th
 For so to in
 Let our frai
 Ay me! W
 Wash far a
 Whether b
 Where thou
 Visit'st the
 Or whether
 Sleep'st by
 Where the
 Looks tow
 Look home
 And, O ye
 Weep no
 For Lycidas
 Sunk thoug
 So sinks the
 And yet an
 And tricks
 Flames in t
 So Lycidas
 Through th
 Where othe
 With nectar
 And hears t
 In the blest
 There enter

POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 187

And purple all the ground with vernal flowers. 140
 Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
 The tufted crow-tee, and pale jessamine,
 The white pink, and the pansy frerkt with jet,
 The glowing violet, 155
 The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,
 With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
 And every flow'r that sad embroidery wears :
 Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
 And daffadillies fill their cups with tears, 158
 To strow the laureat herse where Lycid lies.
 For so to interpose a little ease,
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false formise.
 Ay me! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding seas
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd, 155
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;
 Or whether thou to our moist vows deny'd,
 Sleep'st by the fable of Belierus old, 160
 Where the great vision of the guarded mount
 Looks tow'ard Namancos and Bayona's hold ;
 Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth :
 And, O ye Dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
 Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more.
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead, 166
 Sunk though he be beneath the watry floor ;
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head, 169
 And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky :
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
 Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves,
 Where other groves and other streams along,
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves, 175
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
 There entertain him all the Saints above,

186 POEMS on Several OCCASIONS.

In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move, 180
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood. 185

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray,
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills, 190
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue;
To morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

XVIII.

On the new forcers of conscience under the Long
PARLIAMENT.

BEcause you have thrown off your Prelate Lord,
And with stiff vows renoun'd his Liturgy,
To seize the widow'd whore Plurality
From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd,
Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
To force our consciences that Christ set free,
And ride us with a classic hierarchy
Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford?
Men whose life, learning, faith and pure intent
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be nam'd and printed Heretics
By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call:
But we do hope to find out all your trieks,
Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent,
That so the Parliament

POEMS

May with th
clip your ph
When they
New Presbyt

The

is multa g
word for
Latin meal
mit.

WHat
burts thee o
Pyrrha?
In wreat
ain in thy
faith and
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Unwonte
ho now enj
ho always v
Hopes th
Unmindf
whom thou
sture the sa
My dank
To the st

POEMS on Several OCCASIONS. 187

May with their wholsome and preventive shears 16
 Clip your phylacteries, though bauk your ears,
 And succour our just tears,
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
 New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large. 29

XVIII.

The Fifth ODE of Horace, Lib. I.

His multa gracilis te puer in rosa, rendred almost
 word for word without rime, according to the
 Latin measure, as near as the language will per-
 mit.

W Hat slender youth bedew'd with liquid odors
 Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
 Pyrrha? for whom bind'st thou
 In wreaths thy golden hair,
 Gain in thy neatness? O how oft shall he
 In faith and changed Gods complain, and seas
 Rough with black winds and storms
 Unwonted shall admire!
 Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
 Who always vacant always amiable
 Hopes thee, of flattering gales
 Unmindful. Hapless they
 Whom thou untry'd seem'st fair. Me in my vow'd
 Store the sacred wall declares t'have hang
 My dank and dropping weeds
 To the stern God of sea,

AD PYRRHAM. ODE V.

Horatius ex Pyrrhæ illecebris tanquam é naufragio
enataverat, cujus amore irretitos, affirmat esse
miseros.

QUIS multa gracilis te puer in rosa
Perfusus liquidis urget odoribus,
Grato, Pyrrha, sub antro?
Cui flavam religas comam
Simplex munditiis? heu quoties fidem
Mutatosque deos flebit, et aspera
Nigris æquora ventis
Emirabitur insolens!
Qui nunc te fruitur credulus aurea,
Qui semper vacuam semper amabilem
Sperat, nescius auræ
Fallacis. Miseri quibus
Intentata nites. Me tabula facer
Votiva paries indicat uvida
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris Deo.

SONNETS.

I.

To the NIGHTINGALE.

O Nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray
Warbles at eve, when all the woods are still,

Thou
Whil
Thy liqui
First he
Portend
Have lin
Now time
Foretel
As thou
For my rel
Whethe
Both the

5 Donna legg
L'herbo
Bene é co
10 Qual tuo
Che dolce
De sui at
Ei don,
La onde
15 Quando tu
Che mov
Guardi c
L'entrata,
Gratia fo
Che'l dif

Qual in coll
L'avezza
Va bagna
Che mal
fuor di sua
Così Am

Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
 While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
 Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day, 5
 First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
 Portend success in love; O if Jove's will
 Have link'd that amorous pow'r to thy soft lay,
 Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
 Foretel my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
 As thou from year to year hast sung so late 11
 For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
 Whether the Muse, or Love call thee his mate,
 Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II.

Donna leggiadra il cui bel nome honora
 L'herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco,
 Bene é colui d'ogni valore scareo
 Qual tuo spirto gentil non innamora, 5
 Che dolcemente mostra sì di fuora
 De suoi atti soavi giamai darco,
 E i don, che son d'amor saette ed arco,
 La onde l'alta tua virtù s'infiora.
 Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti 10
 Che mover possa duro alpestre legno,
 Guardi ciascun a gli occhi, ed a gli orecchi
 L'entrata, chi di te si truova indegno;
 Gratia sola di su gli vaglia, inanti
 Che'l disio amoroso al cor s'invecchi.

III.

Qual in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera
 L'avezza giovinetta pastorella
 Va bagnando l'herberta frana e bella
 Che mal si spande a disusata spera
 Fuor di sua natia alme primavera,
 Così Amor meco insù la lingua snella

Desta il fior novo di strania favella,
 Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera,
 Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso
 E'l bel Tam gi cangio col bel Arno,
 Amor lo volse, ed io a l'altrui peso
 Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno.
 Deh! foss' il mio cuor lento e'l duro *seno*
 A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

Canzone.

R IDONSI dōnne e giovani amorosi
 M' uccostandosi attorno, e perche scrivi,
 Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
 Verseggiando d'amor, è come t'osi?
 Dinne, se la rua speme sia mai vana,
 E de pensieri lo miglior t' arrivi;
 Così mi van burlando, altri rivi
 Altri lidi t' aspèton, & altra ondè
 Nelle cui verdi sponde
 Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a la tua chioma
 L'immortal guiderdon d'eternè frondi
 Perche alle spalle tue soverchia soma?
 Canzon dirotti, e tu pèr me rispondi
 Dice mia Donna, e'l suo dir, é il mio cuore
 Questa e lingua di cui si vanta Amore.

IV.

Diodati, e te'l dirò con maraviglia,
 Quel ritraso io ch'amor spreggiar soléa
 E de suoi lacci spesso mi ridéa
 Già caddi, ov'huom dabben talhur s'impiglia.
 Ne treccie d'oro, ne guancia vermiglia
 M'abbaglian sì, ma sotto nova idea
 Pellegrina bellezza che'l cuor bea,
 Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia

Quel ser
 Parol
 E'l ca
 Traviar
 E degl
 Che l'

Per certo
 Esser n
 Si mi
 Per l'a
 Mentre u
 Da qu
 Che fo
 Chiam
 Parte rin
 Scoffo
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 Ma quant
 Tutte
 Finche

Giovane p
 Poi che
 Macdon
 Faro di
 L'hebbi s
 De pen
 Quando
 S'arma
 Tanto del
 Di time
 Quanto
 E di cetra

S O N N E T S.

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Quel sereno fulgor d'amabil nero,
Parole adorne di lingua piu d' una,
E'l cantar che di mezzo l'hemisphero
Traviar ben puo la faticosa Luna,
E degli occhi suoi auventa sì gran fuoc o
Che l'incerar gli orecchi mi sia poco.

10

V.

Per certo i bei vostr' occhi, Donna mi a
Esser non puo che non sian lo mio sole
Si mi percuoton forte, come ei suole
Per l'arene di Libia chi s'inuia,
Mentre un caldo vapor (ne sentì pria)
Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,
Che forse amanti nelle lor parole
Chiaman sospir; io non so che si sia:
Parte rinchiusa, e turbida si celsa
Scoffo mi il petto, e poi n'uscendo poco
Quivi d'attorno o s'agghiaccia, o s'ingiela;
Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco
Tutte le uotti a me suol far pioverse
Finche mia Alba rivien colma di rose.

10

VI.

Giovane piano, e semplicetto amante
Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono;
Macdonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono
Faro divotto; io certo a prove tante
L'hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
S'arma di se, e d' intero diamante,
Tanto del forse, e d' invidia sicuro,
Di timori, e speranze al popol use
Quanto d'ingegno, e d'alto valor vago,
E di cetra sonora, e delle muse.

10

Sol troverte in tal parte men duro
Ove Amor mise l'infanabil ago.

VII.

On his being arriv'd to the age of 23.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stoln on his wing my three and twentieth year.
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits indu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of
Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

VIII.

When the assault was intended to the City.

Captain or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenseless doors may
seise,
If deed of honor did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harm.
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses bow'r:
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tow'r

Went to t
Of sad
To save

Lady that
Wisely haf
And wit
That la
The better
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And at t
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Thy care i
To fill th
And hop
sure
Thou, wh
Passes to
Hast gain

Daughter to
Of Engla
Who liv
And left
Till sad the
Broke hi
At Chær
Kill'd wi
Though lat
Wherein
Madam,
So well you
That all
And to po

SONNETS.

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Went to the ground : And the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the pow'r
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

IX.

To a virtuous young Lady.

Lady that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunn'd the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen
That labor up the hill of heav'nly truth,
The better part with Mary and with Ruth 5
Chosen thou hast ; and they that overween,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity' and ruth.
Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light, 10
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore, be
sure [friends,
Thou, when the bridegroom, with his feastful
Passes to blifs at the mid hour of night,
Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wife and pure,

X.

To the Lady Margaret Ley.

Daughter to that good Earl, once President
Of England's Council, and her Treasury,
Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till sad the breaking of that Parliament 5
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.
Though later born than to have known the days 10
Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
Madam, methinks I see him living yet ;
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true,
And to possess them, honor'd Margaret,

XI.

On the Detraction which followed upon my writing
certain Treatises.

A book was writ of late call'd Tetrachordon,
And woven close, both matter, form and stile;
The subject new: it walk'd the town a while,
Numb'ring good intellects; now seldom por'd on
Cries the stall-reader, Bless us! what a word on
A title page is this! and some in file [End Green
Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile
Why is it harder Sirs than Gordon,
Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galaasp?

Those rugged names to ourlike mouths grow sleek
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp
Thy age, like ours, O Soul of Sir John Cheek,
Hated not learning worse than toad or asp, [Greek
When thou taught'st Cambridge, and King Edward

XII.

On the same.

I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When strait a barbarous noise environs me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs:
As when those hands that were transform'd to frogs
Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny,
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
Licence they mean when they cry Liberty;
For who loves that must first be wise and good:
But from that mark how far they rove we see
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

XIII.

To Mr. H. LAWES on his Airs.

Harry, whose tuneful and well measur'd song
Firm taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent, not to scan

With M
Thy worth
With pr
To after
That wi
Thou hono
To hono
That tur
Dante shall
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On the reli
son, my C
When faith
Had ripe
Meekly
Of death
Thy works
Stay'd no
But as f
Follow'd
Love led th
Thy han
And azu
And spake
Before th
And drin

To
Fairfax, wh
Filling e
And all
And rum

With Midas ears, committing short and long;
 Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
 With praise enough for envy to look wan;
 To after age thou shalt be writ the man, [tongue,
 That with smooth air could'st humour best our
 Thou honor'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
 To honor thee the priest of Phœbus quire, 10
 That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn, or story.
 Dante shall give fame leave to set thee higher
 Than his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing
 Met in the milder shades of purgatory.

XIV.

On the religious memory of Mrs. Catharine Thom-
 son, my Christian Friend, deceas'd 16 Dec. 1646.

When faith and love, which parted from thee never,
 Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
 Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
 Of death, call'd life; which us from life doth sever.
 Thy works and alms and all thy good endeavor 5
 Stay'd not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
 But as faith pointed with her golden rod,
 Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
 Love led them on, and faith who knew them best
 Thy hand-maids, clad them o'er with purple beams
 And azure wings, that up they flew so drest, 10
 And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
 Before the Judge, who thenceforth bid thee rest
 And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

XV.

To the Lord General FAIRFAX.

Fairfax, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
 Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
 And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
 And rumors loud, that daunt remotest kings,

Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
 Victory home, though new rebellions raise
 Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays
 Her broken league to imp their serpent wings.
 O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand
 (For what can war but endless war still breed ?)
 Till truth and right from violence be freed,
 And public faith clear'd from the shameful brand
 Of public fraud. In vain doth valor bleed,
 While avarice and rapin share the land,

XVI.

To the Lord General C R O M W E L L.

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
 Not of war only, but detractions rude,
 Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
 To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
 And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
 Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued,
 While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued
 And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
 And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
 To conquer still ; peace hath her victories
 No less renown'd than war : new foes arise
 Threatning to bind our souls with secular chains ;
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hierling wolves, whose gospel is their maw,

XVII.

To Sir HENRY VANE the younger.

Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
 Than whom a better senator ne'er held
 The helm of Rome, when gowns not arms repell'd
 The fierce Epirot and the African bold,
 Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
 The drift of hollow states hard to be spell'd,
 Then to advise how war may best upheld
 Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
 In all her equipage : besides to know

Both spin
 What se
 h
 The bound
 Therefor
 In peace,

On

venge, O
 Lie scatter
 Ev'n then
 When all
 forget not :
 Who wer
 Slain by t
 Mother w
 he vales re
 To Heave
 'er all th'
 The triple T
 A hundre
 Early may

Then I conf
 Ere half m
 And that c
 Lodg'd wit
 o serve ther
 My true a
 Doth God
 I fondly a
 hat murmu
 Either ma
 Bear his m

SONNETS.

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Both spiritual pow'r and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few
have done :

The bounds of either sword to thee we owe :
Therefore on thy firm hand religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son,

XVIII.

On the late massacre in Piemont.

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
forget not : in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant ; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who having learn'd thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

XIX.

On his blindness.

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide ;
Doth God exact day-labor, light deny'd,
I fondly ask : But patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts ; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best : his state

Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.

XX.

To Mr. LAWRENCE.

Lawrence, of virtuous father, virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a fullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lilly' and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

XXI.

To CYRIAC SKINNER.

Cyriac, whose grandfire on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause
Pronounc'd and in his volumes taught our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth, that after no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest and Archimides pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Towards solid good what leads the nearest way; so
For other things mild Heav'n a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,

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SONNETS.

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That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And when God sends a chearful hour, refrains.

XXII.

To the same.

Pyriac, this three years day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light their seeing have forgot,
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heav'n's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them over-
ply'd
In liberty's defense, my noble task,
Of which all Europe talks from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's
vain mask,
Content though blind, had I no better guide.

XXIII.

On his deceased WIFE.

Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescu'd from death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old Law did save.
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heav'n without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:

P S A L M S.

Her face was veil'd, yet to my fancied sight
 Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
 So clear, as in no face with more delight,
 But oh as to embrace me she inclin'd,
 I wak'd, she fled, and day brought back my night,

P S A L M S.

PSALM I. Done into verse, 1653.

Bless'd is the man who hath not walk'd astray
 In counsel of the wicked, and i'th way
 Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
 Of scorners hath not sat. But in the great
 Jehovah's law is ever his delight, 5
 And in his law he studies day and night.
 He shall be as a tree which planted grows
 By watry streams, and in his season knows
 To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
 And what he takes in hand shall prosper all. 10
 Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
 The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
 In judgment, or abide their trial then,
 Nor sinners in th' assembly of just men.
 For the Lord knows th' upright way of the just, 15
 And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSAL. II. done Aug. 8, 1653. Terzette.

WH Y do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations
 Muse a vain thing, the kings of th' earth upstand
 With pow'r, and princes in their congregations
 Lay deep their plots together through each land
 Against the Lord and his Messiah dear? 5
 Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
 Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
 Their twisted cords: He who in Heav'n doth dwel

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PSAL. II.

LOR

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Shall laugh, the Lord shall scoff them, then severe
 Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell 10
 And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
 Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
 On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
 I will declare; the Lord to me hath said
 Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee 15
 This day; ask of me, and the grant is made;
 As thy possession I on thee bestow
 Th' Heathen, and as thy conquest to be sway'd
 Earth's utmost bounds; them shalt thou bring full low
 With iron scepter bruise'd; and them disperse 20
 Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so,
 And now be wise at length ye Kings averse,
 Be taught ye Judges of the earth; with fear
 Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
 With trembling; kiss the Son lest he appear 25
 In anger and ye perish in the way,
 If once his wrath take fire like fuel sere.
 Happy all those who have in-him their stay.

PSAL. III. Aug. 9. 1653. When he fled from
 Absalom.

LORD how many are my foes!
 How many those
 That in arms against me rise!
 Many are they
 That of my life distrustfully thus say,
 No help for him in God there lies.
 But thou Lord art my shield, my glory,
 Thee through my story
 Th' exalter of my head I count;
 Aloud I cry
 Unto Jehovah, he full soon reply'd
 And heard me from his holy mount.
 I lay and slept, I wak'd again,

For my sustain
 Was the Lord. Of many millions
 The populous rout
 I fear not, though incamping round about
 They pitch against me their pavilions.
R. Lord, save me my God, for thou
 Hast smote ere now
 On the cheek-bone all my foes,
 Of men abhorr'd
 Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the
 Lord;
 Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSAL. IV. Aug. 10, 1653.

ANSWER me when I call,
 God of my righteousness,
 In straits and in distress,
 Thou didst me disenthral
 And set at large; now spare
 Now pity me, and hear my earnest pray'r.
 Great ones how long will ye
 My glory have in scorn,
 How long be thus forborn
 Still to love vanity
 To love, to seek, to prize
 Things false and vain, and nothing else but
 lies?
 Yet know the Lord hath chose,
 Chose to himself apart,
 The good and meek of heart
 (For whom to choose he knows)
 Jehovah from on high
 Will hear my voice what time to him I cry.
 Be aw'd and do not sin,
 Speak to your hearts alone,
 Upon your beds, each one,
 And be at peace within.

Offer the
 Of right
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 But, Lord
 On us life
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 Th

Offer the offerings just

15 Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.

Many there be that say

25

Who yet will shew us good ?

Talking like this world's brood

20 But, Lord, thus let me pray

On us lift up the light

Lift up the favor of thy countenance bright. 30

Into my heart more joy,

And gladness thou hast put,

Than when a year of glut

Their stores doth over-cloy,

And from their plenteous grounds

35

With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.

In peace at once will I

Both lay me down and sleep

For thou alone dost keep

Me safe where'er I lie;

40

As in a rocky cell

Thou Lord alone in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSAL. V. Aug. 12. 1653.

20 **J**ehovah to my words give ear,

My meditation weigh

se but The voice of my complaining hear

My King and God; for unto thee I pray.

Jehovah thou my early voice

Shalt in the morning hear,

I' th' morning I to thee with choice

Will rank my pray'rs, and watch till thou appear.

For thou art not a God that takes

y. In wickedness delight,

10

Evil with thee no biding makes;

20 Fools or madmen stand not within thy sight.

All workers of iniquity

Thou hat'st; and them unblest

Thou wilt destroy that speak a ly; - 15
 The bloody' and guileful man God doth detest.
 But I will in thy mercies dear
 Thy numerous mercies go
 Into thy house; I in thy fear
 Will tow'rds thy holy temple worship low. 20
 Lord lead me in thy righteousness,
 Lead me because of those
 That do observe if I transgress,
 Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
 For in his faltering mouth unstable 25
 No word is firm or sooth;
 Their inside, troubles miserable;
 An open grave their throat, their tongue they
 smooth.
 God, find them guilty, let them fall
 By their own counsels quell'd; 30
 Push them in their rebellions all
 Still on; for against thee they have rebell'd.
 Then all who trust in thee shall bring
 Their joy, while thou from blame
 Defend'st them, they shall ever sing 35
 And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name.
 For thou Jehovah wilt be found
 To bless the just man still,
 As with a shield thou wilt surround
 Him with thy lasting favor and good will. 40

PSAL. VI. Aug. 13, 1653.

LORD in thine anger do not reprehend me,
 Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
 Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
 Am very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
 For all my bones, that ev'n with anguish ake, 5
 Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore,
 And thou, O Lord, how long? turn Lord, restore

My soul, O
 For in death
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 And over

- 15 My soul, O save me for thy goodness sake
 For in death no remembrance is of thee;
 Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise? 16
 Wearied I am with fighting out my days,
 Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
 20 My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
 Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
 I'th' midst of all my enemies that mark 19
 Depart all ye that work iniquity,
 Depart from me, for the voice of my weeping
 25 The Lord hath heard, the Lord hath heard my
 pray'r,
 My supplication with acceptance fair,
 The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.
 Mine enemies shall all be blank and dash'd
 With much confusion; then grown red with shame,
 30 They shall return in haste the way they came,
 And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.

PSAL. VII. Aug. 14. 1653.

35 Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite against him,

ne, **L**ORD my God to thee I fly
 Save me and secure me under
 40 Thy protection while I cry,
 Lest as a lion (and no wonder)
 He haste to tear my soul asunder,
 Tearing and no rescue nigh.

ne, Lord my God if I have thought
 Or done this, if wickedness
 Be in my hands, if I have wrought
 e: Ill to him that meant me peace,
 Or to him have rendered less,
 5 And not free'd my foe for nought;

restore Let th' enemy pursue my soul
 And overtake it, let him tread

My life down to the earth, and roll
In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust and there out-spread
Lodge it with dishonor foul.

Rise Jehovah in thine ire
Rouse thyself amidst the rage
Of my foes that urge like fire;
And wake for me, their fury's assuage;
Judgment here thou didst engage
And command which I desire.

So th' assemblies of each nation
Will surround thee, seeking right,
Thence to thy glorious habitation
Return on high and in their sight.
Jehovah judgeth most upright
All people from the world's foundation,

Judge me Lord, be judge in this
According to my righteousness,
And the innocence which is
Upon me: cause at length to cease
Of evil men the wickedness
And their pow'r that do amiss.

But the just establish fast,
Since thou art the just God that tries
Hearts and reins. On God is cast
My defense, and in him lies,
In him who both just and wise
Saves th' upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe,
And God is every day offended;
If the unjust will not forbear,
His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death, that waits him near,

1) (His arrow
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P S A L M S.

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13 (His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute.) Behold 50
He travels big with vanity
Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old
As in a womb, and from that mold
Hath at length brought forth a lie.
20 He digg'd a pit, and delv'd it deep, 55
And fell into the pit he made;
His mischief that due course doth keep,
Turns on his head, and his ill trade
Of violence will undelay'd
25 Fall on his crown with ruin steep. 60
Then will I Jehovah's praise
According to his justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
30 Of Jehovah the most high.

PsAL. VIII. Aug. 14. 1653.

O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
35 And glorious is thy name through all the earth!
So as above the Heav'ns thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou 5
Hast founded strength because of all thy foes,
40 To stint th' enemy, and slack th' avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy providence to oppose.
When I behold thy Heav'ns, thy fingers art,
The moon and stars which thou so bright hast set
In the pure firmament, then saith my heart 11
45 O what is man that thou remembrest yet,
And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
That him thou visit'st, and of him art found?

Scarce to be less than Gods, thou mad'st his lot, 15
With honor and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him Lord,
Thou hast put all under his lordly feet.

All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
All beasts that in the field or forest meet, 20

Fowl of the Heav'ns, and fish that through the
wet

Sea paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.

O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy name through all the earth!

April. 1648. J. M.

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all,
but what is distinguish'd by inverted comma's,
are the very words of the text, translated from
the original.

PSAL. LXXX.

THOU Shepherd that dost Israel 'keep'
Give ear 'in time of need,'
Who ledest like a flock of sheep
'Thy loved' Joseph's seed,
That sitt between the Cherubs 'bright,'
'Between their wings out-spread'
Shine forth, 'and from thy cloud give light,'
'And on our foes thy dread.'
2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
And in Manasse's sight,
Awake * thy strength, come, 'and be seen'
'To' save us 'by thy might.'

* Gnoreria,

3 Turn u
'To us
Cause thou
And the
4 Lord Go
How lon
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5 Thou fe
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And mak'
'Where
6 A strife
To every
Among the
And * fl
7 Return u
O God o
Cause thou
And the
8 A vine fr
'Thy fro
And drov'st
To plant
9 Thou did
And root
That it 'be
And' fill'
10 With he
The hills
Her boughs
'Advanc
11 Her bran
Down to
And 'upwar
Her other
† Gnasha

P S A L M S.

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Lord,

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3 Turn us again, 'thy grace divine'
'To us' O God 'vouchsafe;'

Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

15

4 Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,]
How long wilt thou declare

Thy † smoking wrath, 'and angry brow'
Against thy people's pray'r!

20

5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears,
Their bread with tears they eat,

And mak'st them † largely drink the tears
'Wherewith their cheeks are wet.'

6 A strife thou mak'st us 'and a prey'
To every neighbour foe,

Among themselves they * laugh, they * play,
And * flouts at us they throw.

7 Return us, 'and thy grace divine'
O God of Hosts 'vouchsafe,'

30

Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
'Thy free love made it thine,'

And drov'st out nations, 'proud and haut,'
To plant this 'lovely' vine.

35

9 Thou did'st prepare for it a place,
And root it deep and fast,

That it 'began to grow apace,'
And 'fill'd the land 'at last.'

10 With her 'green' shade that cover'd 'all,'
The hills were 'overspread,'

Her boughs as 'high as' cedars tall
'Advanc'd their lofty head.'

11 Her branches 'on the western side'
Down to the sea she sent,

45

And 'upward' to that river 'wide'
Her other branches 'went.'

† Gnashanta.

† Shalish.

* Jilgnagu.

- 12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
And broken down her fence, 50
That all may pluck her, as they go,
'With rudest violence?'
- 13 The 'tusked' boar out of the wood
Up turns it by the roots,
Wild beasts there brouze, and make their food 55
'Her grapes and tender shoots.'
- 14 Return now, God of Hosts, look down
From Heav'n thy seat divine,
Behold 'us, but without a frown,'
And visit this 'thy' vine. 60
- 15 Visit this vine, which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted 'long,'
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.
- 16 But now it is consum'd with fire, 65
And cut 'with axes' down,
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.
- 17 Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy 'good' hand be 'laid,' 70
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.
- 18 So shall we not go back from thee
'To ways of sin and shame,'
Quicken us thou, then 'gladly' we
Shall call upon thy Name. 75
- 19 Return us, 'and thy grace divine'
Lord God of Hosts 'vouchsafe.'
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe. 80

PSAL. LXXXI.

1 **T**O God our strength sing loud, 'and clear,'
Sing loud to God 'our King,'

To Jacob
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2 Prepare
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3 Blow,
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4 This w
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6 From h
I set hi
His hand
Deliver
7 When
'On n
And I to
'And
I answer
With o
I try'd th
Of Me
8 Hear,
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'Thou a
If thou
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No ali

P S A L M S.

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To Jacob's God, 'that all may hear,'
 Loud acclamations ring.
 2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
 The timbrel hither bring,
 The 'chearful' psaltry bring along,
 And harp 'with' pleasant 'string.'
 3 Blow, 'as is wont,' in the new moon
 With trumpets 'lofty sound,'
 Th' appointed time, the day whereon
 Our solemn feast 'comes round.'
 4 This was a statute 'giv'n of old'
 For Israel 'to observe,'
 A law of Jacob's God, 'to hold,'
 'From whence they might not swerve.'
 5 This he a testimony ordain'd
 In Joseph, 'not to change,'
 6 When as he pass'd through Egypt land,
 The tongue I heard was strange.
 6 From burden, 'and from slavish toil'
 I set his shoulder free:
 His hands from pots, 'and miry soil,'
 7 Deliver'd were 'by me.'
 7 When trouble did thee sore assail,
 'On me then' didst thou call,
 And I to free thee 'did not fail,'
 'And led thee out of thrall.'
 7 I answer'd thee in 'thunder deep'
 With clouds incompass'd round;
 I try'd thee at the water 'sleep'
 Of Meriba 'renown'd.'
 8 Hear, O my People, 'hearken well,'
 I testify to thee,
 'Thou ancient stock of Israel,
 If thou wilt list to me,
 9 Throughout the land of thy abode,
 No alien God shall be,

5

10

15

20

25

30

35

• Be Sether ragnam.

Nor shalt thou to a foreign God

In honor bend thy knee.

10 I am the Lord thy God which brought
Thee out of Egypt land;

Ask large enough, and I, 'besought,'

Will grant thy full demand.

11 And yet my people would not 'hear,'

'Nor' hearken to my voice:

And Israel, 'whom I lov'd so dear,'

Mislik'd me for his choice.

12 Then did I leave them to their will,

And to their wand'ring mind;

Their own conceits they followed still,

Their own devices blind.

13 O that my people would 'be wise,'

'To' serve me 'all their days,'

And O that Israel would 'advise'

'To' walk my 'righteous' ways.

14 Then would I soon bring down their foes,

'That now so proudly rise,'

And turn my hand 'against all these'

'That are' their enemies.

15 Who hate the Lord should 'then be fain,'

'To' bow to him and bend,

But 'they' his people, should remain,

Their time should have no end.

16 And he would feed them 'from the shock'

With flow'r of finest wheat,

And satisfy them from the rock

With honey 'for their meat.'

PSAL. LXXXII.

GOD in the * great * assembly stands
'Of kings and lordly states,'

* Bagnadath-cl.

† Among
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2 How lon
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7 But ye f
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8 Rise Go
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Sit thou no

'We cry

† Beken
† Hatzdik

† Among the Gods, † on both his hands
He judges and debates.

40 2 How long will ye † pervert the right
With † judgment false and wrong,
Favoring the wicked ' by your might,'
' Who thence grow bold and strong?'

48 3 * Regard the * weak and fatherless,
* Dispatch the * poor man's cause,
And † raise the man in deep distress
By † just and equal laws.

50 4 Defend the poor and desolate,
And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate
Of him ' that help demands.'

58 5 They know not nor will understand,
In darkness they walk on,
The earth's foundations all are † mov'd,
And † out of order gone.

60 6 I said that ye were Gods, yea all
The sons of God most high ;

7 But ye shall die like men, and fall
As other princes ' die.'

60 8 Rise God, || judge thou the earth ' in might,' 23
This ' wicked' earth || redress,
For thou art he who shalt by right
The nations all possess.

PSAL. LXXXIII.

1 **B**E not thou silent ' now at length,'
O God hold not thy peace,
Sit thou not still, O God of ' strength,'
' We cry, and do not cease.'

† Bekerev. † Tishphetu gnavel. * Shiphtu-dal,
† Hatzdiku, † Jimmotu, || Shiphta,

- 2 For lo thy 'furious' foes 'now' & swell,
 And & storm outrageously,
 And they that hate thee 'proud and fell'
 Exalt their heads full high.
- 3 Against thy people they || contrive
 & Their plots and counsels deep,
 † Them to insnare they chiefly strive,
 † Whom thou dost hide and keep.
- 4 Come let us cut them off, say they,
 Till they no nation be,
 That Israel's name for ever may
 Be lost in memory.
- 5 For they consult & with all their might,
 And all as one in mind
 Themselves against thee they unite,
 And in firm union bind.
- 6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
 Of 'scornful' Ishmael,
 Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
 'That in the desert dwell,'
- 7 Gebal and Ammon 'there conspire,'
 And 'hateful' Amalet,
 The Philistims, and they of Tyre,
 'Whose bounds the Sea doth check.'
- 8 With them 'great' Ashur also bands,
 'And doth confirm the knot :'
 'All these have lent their armed hands'
 To aid the sons of Lot.
- 9 Do to them as to Midian 'bold,'
 'That wasted all the coast.'
 To Sisea, and as 'is told'
 'Thou didst' to Jabin's 'host,'
- 'When' at the brook of Kishon 'old'
 'They were repuls'd and slain,'
- 10 At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
 As dung upon the plain.
- & Jehemajun. || Jagnarimu. & Sod. † Jirthe
 jagnatrugnal. † Tsephuneca. & Lev. jachdan.

11 As 2
 So let
 As Zeba
 So let
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 25 17 Asham
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 18 Then
 30 Jehovah
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 O'er all
 1 H
 30 O Lord
 The 'pleas
 Where th
 2 My soul
 Thy coun
 40 My heart an
 O living
 * Neoth
 amc. Heb

- 8 11 As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
So let their princes speed,
As Zeba, and Zalmunna 'bled,'
So let their princes 'bleed.'
- 10 12 'For they amidst their pride' have said, 45
By right now shall we seise
Gqd's houses, and 'will now invade'
* Their stately palaces.
- 13 My God, oh make them as a wheel,
'No quiet let them find,' 50
Giddy and 'restless' let 'them reel'
Like stubble from the wind.
- 14 As 'when' an 'aged' wood takes fire
'Which on a sudden strays,'
The 'greedy' flame runs higher and higher 55
Till all the mountains blaze,
- 20 15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase;
16 || And till they || yield thee honor due;
Lord fill with shame their face. 60
- 25 17 Asham'd, and troubled let them be,
Troubled, and sham'd for ever,
Ever confounded, and so die
With shame, 'and scape it never.'
- 30 18 Then shall they know that thou whose name 65
Jehovah is alone,
Art the most high, 'and thou the same'
O'er all the earth 'art one.'

1 PSAL. LXXXIV.

- 35 1 **H**OW lovely are thy dwellings fair!
O Lord of Hosts, how dear
The 'pleasant' tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near!
- 2 My soul doth long and almost die
Thy courts O Lord to see, 5
4 My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
O living God, for thee.
- + Jirthe
hdau. * Neoth Elohim bears both. || They seek thy
ame. Heb.

- 3 There ev'n the sparrow ' freed from wrong'
 Hath found a house of ' rest,'
 The swallow there, to lay her young
 Hath built her ' brooding' nest,
 Ev'n by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
 ' They find their safe abode,'
 ' And home they fly from round the coasts'
 ' Toward thee,' my King, my God.
 4 Happy, who in thy house reside,
 Where thee they ever praise,
 5 Happy, whose strength in thee doth bide,
 And in their hearts thy ways.
 6 They pass through Baca's ' thirsty' vale,
 ' That dry and barren ground,'
 As through a fruitful watry dale
 Where springs and show'rs abound.
 7 They journey on from strength to strength
 ' With joy and gladsome cheer,'
 ' Till' all before ' our' God ' at length'
 In Zion do appear.
 8 Lord God of Hosts hear ' now' my prayer,
 O Jacob's God give ear,
 9 Thou God our shield look on the face
 Of thy anointed ' dear.'
 10 For one day in thy courts ' to be'
 Is better, ' and more blest,'
 Than ' in the joys of vanity'
 A thousand days ' at best.'
 I in the temple of my God
 Had rather keep a door,
 Than dwell in tents, ' and rich-abode,'
 With sin ' for evermore.'
 11 For God the Lord both sun and shield
 Gives grace and glory ' bright,'
 No good from them shall be withheld
 Whose ways are just and right.
 12 Lord ' God' of Hosts ' that reign'st on high,'
 That man is ' truly' blest,

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 * Heb.
 † Heb.

10 Who 'only' on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

PSAL. LXXXV.

1 **T**H Y land to favor graciously
15 Thou hast not Lord been slack,
Thou hast from 'hard' captivity
Returned Jacob back.
2 Th' iniquity thou didst forgive
5 'That wrought' thy people woe,
20 And all their sin, 'that did thee grieve,'
Hast hid 'where none shall know.'
3 Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,
And 'calmly' didst return
25 From thy * fierce wrath which we had prov'd
Far worse than fire to burn.
4 God of our saving health and peace,
Turn us, and us restore,
Thine indignation cause to cease
r, 15 Toward us, 'and chide no more.'
30 Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus,
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
From age to age on us? 20
35 Wilt thou not † turn, and 'hear our voice,'
And us again † revive,
That so thy people may rejoice
By thee preserv'd alive.
7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord, 25
40 To us thy mercy shew,
Thy saving health to us afford,
'And life in us renew.'
'And now' what God the Lord will speak,
I will 'go strait and' hear, 30
high, 40

* Heb. 'The burning heat of thy wrath.'

† Heb. 'turn to quicken us.'

For to his people he speaks peace,
 And to his saints 'full dear,'
 To his dear saints he will speak peace,
 But let them never more
 Return to folly, 'but surcease'
 'To trespass as before.'
 9 Surely to such as do him fear
 Salvation is at hand,
 And glory shall 'ere long appear'
 'To' dwell within our land.
 11 Mercy and Truth 'that long were miss'd'
 Now 'joyfully' are met,
 'Sweet' Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,
 'And hand in hand are set,'
 11 Truth from the earth, 'like to a flow'r,'
 Shall bud and blossom 'then,'
 And Justice from her heav'nly bow'r
 Look down 'on mortal men.'
 12 The Lord will also then bestow
 Whatever thing is good,
 Our land shall forth in plenty throw
 Her fruits 'to be our food.'
 13 Before him Righteousness shall go
 'His royal harbinger,'
 Then * will he come, and not be slow,
 His footsteps cannot err.

PSAL. LXXXVI.

THY 'gracious' ear, O Lord, incline,
 O hear me 'I thee pray,'
 For I am poor, and almost pine
 With need, 'and sad decay.'

* Heb. 'He will set his steps to the way.'

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 * Heb.
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P S A L M S.

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- 1 Preserve my soul, for * I have trod
Thy ways, and love the just,
Save thou thy servant, O my God,
Who 'still' in thee doth trust,
35 2 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
I call; 4. O make rejoice
Thy servant's soul; for Lord to thee
I lift my soul 'and voice.'
3 For thou art good, thou Lord art prone
40 To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou 'alone'
To them that on thee call.
5 Unto my supplication, Lord,
Give ear, and to the cry
45 Of my 'incessant' pray'rs afford
Thy hearing graciously.
6 I in the day of my distress
Will call on thee 'for aid;'
For thou wilt 'grant' me 'free access,'
40 'And' answer 'what I pray'd.'
7 Like thee among the Gods is none,
O Lord, nor any works
Of all that other Gods have done
Like to thy 'glorious' works.
50 8 The nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, 'and all shall frame'
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy name.
9 For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand art done,
Thou 'in thy everlasting seat'
35 Remainest God alone.
10 Teach me, O Lord, thy way, 'most right,'
I in thy truth will bide,
To fear thy name my heart unite,
'So shall it never slide.'
40 * Heb. 'I am good, loving, a doer of good
and holy things.'

12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,
 'Thee honour and adore'
 With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
 Thy name for evermore.
 13 For great thy mercy is tow' red me,
 And thou hast free'd my soul,
 Ev'n from the lowest Hell set free,
 'From deepest darkness foul.'
 14 O God the proud against me rise,
 And violent men are met
 To seek my life, and in their eyes
 No fear of thee have set.
 15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
 Readiest thy grace to shew,
 Slow to be angry, and 'art still'd'
 Most merciful, most true.
 16 O turn to me 'thy face at length,'
 And me have mercy on,
 Unto thy servant give thy strength,
 And save thy handmaid's son.
 17 Some sign of good to me afford,
 And let my foes 'then' see,
 And be asham'd, because thou Lord
 Dost help and comfort me.

PSAL. LXXXVII.

1 **A**MONG the holy mountains 'high'
 Is his foundation fast,
 'There seated is his sanctuary,'
 'His temple there is plac'd,'
 2 Sion's 'fair' gates the Lord loves more
 Than all the dwellings 'fair'
 Of Jacob's 'land, though there be store,'
 'And all within his care.'
 3 City of God, most glorious things
 Of thee 'abroad' are spoke;

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P S A L M S.

221

4 I mention Egypt, ' where proud kings'
' Did our forefathers yoke.'

I mention Babel to my friends,
Philistia ' full of scorn'

49 And Tyre with Ethiops ' utmost ends,'
Lo this man there was born:

15

5 But ' twice that praise shall in our ear'
Be said of Sion ' last,'

50 This and this man was born in her,
High God shall fix her fast.

20

6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll
That ne'er shall be out-worn,

When he the nations doth inroll,
That this man there was born.

55 7 Both they who sing, and they who dance,
' With sacred songs are there,'

25

In thee ' fresh brooks, and soft streams glance,'
' And' all my fountains ' clear.'

PsAL. LXXXVIII.

1 **L**ORD God that dost me save and keep,
All day to thee I cry;

And all night long before thee ' weep,'
Before thee ' prostrate lie.'

2 Into thy presence let my pray'r
' With sighs devout ascend,'

5

And to my cries, that ' ceaseless are,'
Thine ear with favor bend.

3 For cloy'd with woes and trouble sore
Surcharg'd my soul doth lie,

10

My life ' at death's uncheerful door'
Unto the grave draws nigh.

5 Reckon'd I am with them that pass
Down to the ' dismal' pit,

I am a * man, but weak alas,
And for that name unfit.

15

10 * Heb. ' A man without manly strength.'

- 5 From life discharg'd and parted quite
 Among the dead to 'sleep,'
 And like the slain 'in bloody fight'
 That in the grave lie 'deep.'
 Whom thou rememberest no more,
 Dost never more regard,
 Them from thy hand deliver'd o'er
 'Death's hideous house hath barr'd.'
 6 Thou in the lowest pit 'profound'
 Hast set me 'all forlorn,'
 Where thickest darkness 'hovers round,'
 In horrid deeps 'to mourn.'
 7 Thy wrath, 'from which no shelter saves,'
 Full sore doth press on me;
 * Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
 * And all thy waves break me,
 8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
 And mak'st me odious,
 Me to them odious, 'for they change,'
 And I here pent up thus.
 9 Through sorrow, and affliction great,
 Mine eye grows dim and dead,
 Lord, all the day I thee intreat,
 My hands to thee I spread.
 10 Wilt thou do wonders on the dead,
 Shall the deceas'd arise
 And praise thee 'from their loathsome bed'
 'With pale and hollow eyes?'
 11 Shall they thy loving kindness tell
 On whom the grave 'hath hold,'
 Or they who in perdition 'dwell,'
 Thy faithfulness 'unfold?'
 12 In darkness can thy mighty 'hand,'
 'Or' wondrous acts be known,
 Thy justice in the 'gloomy' land
 Of 'dark' oblivion?

* The Hebr. bears both.

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- 13 But I to thee, O Lord, do cry,
 ' Ere yet my life be spent,'
 And ' up to thee' my pray'r ' doth hie,' 55
 Each morn, and thee prevent.
 14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
 And hide thy face from me,
 15 That am already bruise'd, and † shake
 With terror sent from thee?
 25 Bruise'd, and afflicted, and ' so low'
 As ready to expire,
 While I thy terrors undergo
 Astonish'd with thine ire.
 16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow, 65
 Thy threatnings cut me through:
 17 All day they round about me go,
 Like waves they me pursue.
 18 Lover and friend thou hast remov'd
 And sever'd from me far: 70
 35 They ' fly me now' whom I have lov'd,
 And as in darkness are.

A Paraphrase on PSAL. CXIV.

This and the following Psalm were done by the
 Author at fifteen years old.

40 **W** HEN the blest seed of Terah's faithful son
 After long toil their liberty had won,
 And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
 Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand,
 45 Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown, 5
 His praise and glory was in Israel known.
 That saw the troubled sea, and shivering fled.
 And sought to hide his froth-begurled head
 Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
 50 As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foil. 10
 The high, huge-bellied mountains skip like rams
 Amongst their ewes, the little hills like lambs.
 Why fled the ocean? And why skipt the mountains?
 Why turned Jordan tow'rd his crystal fountains?

† Heb. Præ Conssione.

Shake Earth, and at the presence be aghast
Of him that ever was, and ay shall last,
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

PSAL. CXXXVI.

LET us with a gladsome mind
Praise the Lord, for he is kind,

For his mercies ay indure,

Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his name abroad,

For of Gods he is the God ;

For his &c.

O let us his praises tell,

Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell.

For his &c.

Who with his miracles doth make
Amazed Heav'n and Earth to shake.

For his &c.

Who by his wisdom did create

The painted Heav'ns so full of state.

For his &c.

Who did the solid earth ordain.

To rise above the watry plain.

For his &c.

Who by his all-commanding might

Did fill the new-made world with light.

For his &c.

And caus'd the golden-tressed sun,

All the day long his course to run.

For his &c.

The horned moon to shine by night,

Amongst her spangled sisters bright.

For his &c.

He with his thunder-clasping hand

Smote the first-born of Egypt land.

For his &c.

And in despite of Pharaoh fell,

He brought from thence his Israel.

For his &c.

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P S A L M S.

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The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythæan main.

45

The floods stood still like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass.

50

For his &c.

But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power.

For his &c.

55

His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness.

For his &c.

In bloody battel he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown.

For his &c.

He foil'd bold Seon and his host,
That rul'd the Amorrean coast.

For his &c.

And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew.

For his &c.

And to his servant Israel
He gave their land therein to dwell.

For his &c.

He hath with a piteous eye
Beheld us in our misery.

For his &c.

And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy.

For his &c.

All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need.

For his &c.

Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth.

For his &c.

That his mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye.

For his mercies ay indure,

Ever faithful, ever sure.

K 9

A small TRACTATE
OF
EDUCATION.
TO
Mr. SAMUEL HARTLIB.

Written about the Year 1650.

Mr. HARTLIB.

I AM long since persuaded, that to say, or do ought worth memory and imitation, no purpose or respect should sooner move us, than simply the love of God, and of mankind. Nevertheless to write now the reforming of education, tho' it be one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on, and for the want whereof this nation perishes, I had not yet at this time been induc'd, but by your earnest intreaties and serious conjurements; as having my mind for the present half diverted in the pursuit of some other assertions, the knowledge and the use of which cannot but be a great furtherance both to the enlargement of truth, and honest living, with much

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much more peace. Nor should the laws of any private friendship have prevail'd with me to divide thus, or transpose my former thoughts, but that I see those aims, those actions which have won you with me the esteem of a person sent hither by some good providence from a far country, to be the occasion and the incitement of great good to this island. And, as I hear, you have obtain'd the same repute with men of most approv'd wisdom, and some of highest authority among us. Not to mention the learned correspondence which you hold in foreign parts; and the extraordinary pains and diligence which you have us'd in this matter both here, and beyond the seas; either by the definite will of God so ruling, or the peculiar sway of nature, which also is God's working. Neither can I think that, so reputed, and so valu'd as you are, you would, to the forfeit of your own discerning ability, impose upon me an unfit and over-ponderous argument, but that the satisfaction which you profess to have receiv'd from those incidental discourses which we have wander'd into, hath prest and almost constrain'd you into a persuasion that what you require from me in this point, I neither ought, nor can in conscience defer beyond this time both of so much need at once, and so much opportunity to try what God hath determin'd. I will not resist therefore, whatever it is, either of divine or human obligation, that you lay upon me; but will forthwith set down in writing, as you request me, that voluntary idea which hath long in silence presented itself to me, of a better education, in extent and comprehension far more large, and yet of time far shorter, and of attainment far more certain, than hath been yet in practice. Brief I shall endeavour to be; for that which I have to say, assuredly this nation hath extreme need should be done sooner than spoken. To tell you therefore what I have benefited herein among old renowned authors, I shall spare; and to

search what many modern Januas and Didactics, more than ever I shall read, have projected, my inclination leads me not. But if you can accept of these few observations which have flower'd off, and are, as it were, the burnishing of many studious and contemplative years, altogether spent in the search of religious and civil knowledge, and such as pleas'd you so well in the relating, I here give you them to dispose of.

The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest, by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith makes up the highest perfection. But because our understanding cannot in this body found itself but on sensible things, nor arrive so clearly to the knowledge of God and things invisible, as by orderly conning over the visible and inferior creature, the same method is necessarily to be follow'd in all discreet teaching. And seeing every nation affords not experience and tradition enough for all kinds of learning, therefore we are chiefly taught the languages of those people who have at any time been most industrious after wisdom; so that language is but the instrument conveying to us things useful to be known. And tho' a linguist should pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into, yet, if he had not studied the solid things in them as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteem'd a learned man, as any yeoman or tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only. Hence appear the many mistakes which have made learning generally so unpleasing and so unsuccessful; first we do amiss to spend seven or eight years merely in sciaping together so much miserable Latin and Greek, as might be learnt otherwise easily and delightfully in one year.

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And that which casts our proficiency therein so much behind, is our time lost partly in too oft idle vacancies given both to schools and universities, partly in a preposterous exaction, forcing the empty wits of children to compose themes, verses and orations, which are the acts of ripest judgment, and the final work of a head fill'd, by long reading and observing, with elegant maxims, and copious invention. These are not matters to be wrung from poor striplings, like blood out of the nose, or the plucking of untimely fruit: besides the ill habit which they get of wretched barbarizing against the Latin and Greek Idiom, with their untutor'd Anglicisms, odious to be read, yet not to be avoided without a well-continu'd and judicious conversing among pure authors digested, which they scarce taste; whereas, if after some preparatory grounds of speech by their certain forms got into memory, they were led to the praxis thereof in some chosen short book lesson'd thoroughly to them, they might then forthwith proceed to learn the substance of good things, and arts in due order, which would bring the whole language quickly into their power. This I take to be the most rational and most profitable way of learning languages, and whereby we may best hope to give account to God of our youth spent herein. And for the usual method of teaching arts, I deem it to be an old error of universities not yet well recover'd from the scholastick grossness of barbarous ages, that instead of beginning with arts most easy, (and those be such as are most obvious to the sense,) they present their young unmatriculated novices at first coming with the intellective abstractions of logick and metaphysicks: so that they having but newly left those grammatick flats and shallows where they stuck unreasonably, to learn a few words with lamentable construction, and now on the sudden transported under another climate to be tost and turmoil'd with their unballasted wits in fathomless and unquiet

unquiet deeps of controversy, do for the most part grow into hatred and contempt of learning, mock'd and deluded all this while with ragged notions and babblements, while they expected worthy and delightful knowledge; till poverty or youthful years call them importunately their several ways, and hasten them with the sway of friends, either to an ambitious or mercenary, or ignorantly zealous divinity: some allur'd to the trade of law, grounding their purposes not on the prudent and heavenly contemplation of justice and equity, which was never taught them, but on the promising and pleasing thoughts of litigious terms, fat contentions, and flowing fees; others betake them to state affairs, with souls so unprincipled in virtue, and true generous breeding, that flattery, and court-shifts, and tyrannous aphorisms appear to them the highest points of wisdom; instilling their barren hearts with a conscientious slavery, if, as I rather think, it be not feign'd: others, lastly, of a more delicious and airy spirit, retire themselves, knowing no better, to the enjoyments of ease and luxury, living out their days in feast and jollity; which indeed is the wisest and the safest course of all these, unless they were with more integrity undertaken. And these are the fruits of mispending our prime youth at the schools and universities as we do, either in learning mere words, or such things chiefly as were better unlearn'd.

I shall detain you no longer in the demonstration of what we should not do, but straight conduct you to a hill-side, where I will point ye out the right path of a virtuous and noble education; laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospect, and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming. I doubt not but ye shall have more ado to drive our dullest and laziest youth, our stocks and stubs, from the infinite desire of such a happy nurture, than we have now to hale and drag

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our choicest and hopefullest wits to that asinine feast of fowthistles and brambles which is commonly set before them, as all the food and entertainment of their tenderest and most docible age. I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously, all the offices, both private and publick, of peace and war. And how all this may be done between twelve and one and twenty, less time than is now bestow'd in pure trifling at grammar and sophistry, is to be thus order'd.

First, to find out a spacious house, and ground about it, fit for an Academy, and big enough to lodge an hundred and fifty persons, whereof twenty or thereabout may be attendants, all under the government of one, who shall be thought of desert sufficient, and ability either to do all, or wisely to direct, and oversee it done. This place should be at once both school and university, not needing a remove to any other house of scholarship, except it be some peculiar college of law, or physick, where they mean to be practitioners; but as for those general studies which take up all our time from Lilly to the commencing, as they term it, master of arts, it should be absolute. After this pattern, as many edifices may be converted to this use, as shall be needful in every city throughout this land, which would tend much to the increase of learning and civility every where. This number, less or more thus collected, to the convenience of a foot company, or interchangeably two troops of cavalry, should divide their days work into three parts, as it lies orderly: their studies, their exercise, and their d et.

For their studies, first they should begin with the chief and necessary rules of some good grammar, either that now us'd, or any better: and while this is doing, their speech is to be fashion'd to a distinct and clear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian;

Italian, especially in the vowels. For we Englishmen, being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air, wide enough to grace a southern tongue; but are observ'd by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward: so that to smatter Latin with an English mouth, is as ill a hearing as Law-French. Next to make them expert in the usefulest points of grammar, and withal to season them, and win them early to the love of virtue and true labour, ere any flattering seducement, or vain principle seize them wandering, some easy and delightful book of education should be read to them; whereof the Greeks have store, as Cebes, Plutarch, and other Socratic discourses. But in Latin we have none of classic authority extant, except the two or three first books of Quintilian, and some select pieces else-where. But here the main skill and ground-work will be, to temper them such lectures and explanations upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflam'd with the study of learning, and the admiration of virtue; stirr'd up with high hopes of living to be brave men, and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages, that they may despise and scorn all their childish and ill-taught qualities, to delight in manly and liberal exercises, which he who hath the art and proper eloquence to catch them with, what with mild and effectual persuasions, and that with the intimation of some fear, if need be, but chiefly by his own example, might in a short space gain them to an incredible diligence and courage; infusing into their young breasts such an ingenuous and noble ardor, as would not fail to make many of them renowned and matchless men. At the same time, some other hour of the day, might be taught them the rules of arithmetick, and soon after the elements of geometry even playing, as the old manner was. After evening-repasts, till bed-time, their thoughts will be best taken up in the easy grounds of religion, and the

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story of scripture. The next step would be to the
 authors of Agriculture, Cato, Varro, and Columella,
 for the matter is most easy, and if the language be
 difficult so much the better, it is not a difficulty
 above their years: and here will be an occasion of
 inciting and enabling them hereafter to improve the
 tillage of their country, to recover the bad soil, and
 to remedy the waste that is made of good: for this
 was one of Hercules's praises. Ere half these au-
 thors be read (which will soon be with plying hard,
 and daily) they cannot choose but be masters of an
 ordinary prose. So that it will be then seasonable
 for them to learn in any modern author, the use of
 the globes, and all the maps; first with the old
 names, and then with the new: Or they might be
 then capable to read any compendious method of
 natural philosophy. And at the same time might
 they be entring into the Greek tongue, after the
 same manner as was before prescrib'd in the Latin;
 whereby the difficulties of grammar being soon over-
 come, all the historical physiology of Aristotle and
 Theophrastus are open before them, and, as I may
 say, under contribution. The like access will be
 to Vitruvius, to Seneca's natural questions, to Mela,
 Celsus, Pliny, or Solinus. And having thus past
 the principles of Arithmetick, Geometry, Astro-
 nomy, and Geography, with a general compact of
 physicks, they may descend in Mathematicks to the
 instrumental science of Trigonometry, and from
 thence to fortification, architecture, enginry, or na-
 vigation. And in natural philosophy they may pro-
 ceed leisurely from the history of meteors, minerals,
 plants and living creatures, as far as anatomy. Then
 also in course might be read to them out of some not
 tedious writer the institution of physick; that they
 may know the tempers, the humours, the seasons,
 and how to manage a crudity: which he who can
 wisely and timely do, is not only a great physician
 to himself, and to his friends, but also may at some
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time or other save an army by this frugal and expenseless means only; and not let the healthy and stout bodies of young men rot away under him for want of this discipline; which is a great pity and no less a shame to the commander. To set forward all these proceedings in nature and mathematicks, what hinders, but that they may procure as oft as shall be needful, the helpful experiences of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries; and in the other sciences, architects, engineers, mariners, anatomists, who doubtless would be ready, some for reward, and some to favour such a hopeful seminary? And this will give them such a real tincture of natural knowledge, as they shall never forget, but daily augment with delight. Then also those poets which are now counted most hard, will be both facile and pleasant, Orpheus, Hesiod, Theocritus, Aratus, Nicander, Oppian, Dionysius; and in Latin, Lucretius, Manilius, and the rural part of Virgil.

By this time, years and good general precepts will have furnish'd them more distinctly with that act of reason which in Ethics is called *Proairesis*; that they may with some judgment contemplate upon moral good and evil. Then will be requir'd a special reinforcement of constant and sound endocinating to set them right and firm, instructing them more amply in the knowledge of virtue and the hatred of vice; while their young and pliant affections are led thro' all the moral works of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Plutarch, Laertius, and those Locrian remnants; but still to be reduc'd in their nightward studies, wherewith they close the day's work, under the determinate sentence of David or Solomon, or the evangelists and apostolic scriptures. Being perfect in the knowledge of personal duty, they may then begin the study of æconomics. And either now, or before this, they may have easily learnt at any odd hour the Italian tongue. And soon after,

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after, but with wariness and good antidote, it would be wholesome enough to let them taste some choice comedies, Greek, Latin, or Italian: those tragedies also that treat of household matters, as *Trachiniae*, *Alceſtis*, and the like. The next remove must be to the study of Politics; to know the beginning, end, and reasons of political societies; that they may not in a dangerous fit of the common-wealth be such poor, shaken, uncertain reeds, of such a tottering conscience, as many of our great counsellors have lately shewn themselves, but steadfast pillars of the state. After this they are to dive into the grounds of law, and legal justice; deliver'd first, and with best warrant, by *Moses*; and as far as human prudence can be trusted, in those extoll'd remains of Græcian law-givers, *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, *Zalucus*, *Charondas*; and thence to all the Roman edicts and tables, with their *Justinian*; and so down to the Saxon and common laws of England, and the statutes. Sundays also and every evening may be now understandingly spent in the highest matters of Theology, and church-history, antient and modern; and ere this time the Hebrew tongue at a set hour might have been gain'd, that the scriptures may be now read in their own original; whereto it would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee, and Syrian dialect. When all these employments are well conquer'd, then with the choice histories, heroic poems, and Attic tragedies of stateliest and most regal argument with all the famous political orations, offer themselves; which if they were not only read, but some of them got by memory, and solemnly pronounc'd with right accent and grace, as might be taught, would endue them even with the spirit and vigour of *Demosthenes*, or *Cicero*, *Euripides*, or *Sophocles*. And now lastly will be the time to read with them those organic arts which enable men to discourse and write perspicuously, elegantly, and according to the fittest style of lofty, mean,

mean, or lowly. Logic therefore, so much as is useful, is to be referr'd to this due place, with all her well-couch'd heads and topics, until it be time to open her contracted palm into a graceful and ornate rhetorick, taught out of the rules of Plato, Aristotle, Phalereus, Cicero, Hermogenes, Longinus. To which Poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous and passionate. I mean not here the prosody of a verse, which they could not but have hit on before among the rudiments of grammar; but that sublime art which in Aristotle's Poetics, in Horace, and the Italian commentaries of Castlevetro, Tazzo, Mazzoni, and others, teaches what the laws are of a true Epic poem, what of a Dramatic, what of a Lyric, what decorum is, which is the grand master-piece to observe. This would make them soon perceive what despicable creatures our common rhymers and playwrights be, and shew them, what religious, what glorious and magnificent use might be made of poetry both in divine and human things. From hence and not till now will be the right season of forming them to be able writers and composers in every excellent matter, when they shall be thus fraught with an universal insight into things. Or whether they be to speak in parliament or council, honour and attention would be waiting on their lips. There would then also appear in pulpits other visages, other gestures, and stuff otherwise wrought than what we now sit under, of-times to as great a trial of our patience as any other that they preach to us. These are the studies wherein our noble and our gentle youth ought to bestow their time in a disciplinary way from twelve to one and twenty; unless they rely more upon their ancestors dead, than upon themselves living. In which methodical course it is so suppos'd they must proceed by the steady pace of learning onward, as at convenient times for me-

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memory's sake to retire back into the middle ward, and sometimes into the rear of what they have been taught, until they have confirm'd, and solidly united the whole body of their perfected knowledge, like the last embattelling of a Roman legion. Now will be worth the seeing what exercises and recreations may best agree, and become these studies.

THEIR EXERCISE.

The course of study hitherto briefly describ'd, is, what I can guess by reading, likest to those antient and famous schools of Pythagoras, Plato, Isocrates, Aristotle, and such others, out of which were bred up such a number of renowned philosophers, orators, historians, poets and princes all over Greece, Italy, and Asia, besides the flourishing studies of Cyene and Alexandria. But herein it shall exceed them, and supply a defect as great as that which Plato noted in the commonwealth of Sparta; whereas that city train'd up their youth most for war, and these in their academies and Lycæum, all for the gown, this institution of breeding, which I here delineate, shall be equally good both for peace and war. Therefore about an hour and a half ere they eat at noon should be allow'd them for exercise, and due rest afterward; but the time for this may be enlarg'd at pleasure, according as their rising in the morning shall be early. The exercise which I commend first, is the exact use of their weapon, to guard and to strike safely with edge or point; this will keep them healthy, nimble, strong, and well in breath, is also the likeliest means to make them grow large and tall, and to inspire them with a gallant and fearless courage, which being temper'd with seasonable lectures and precepts to them of true fortitude and patience, will turn into a native and heroic valour, and make them hate the cowardise of doing wrong. They must be also practis'd in all the locks and gripes of wrestling, wherein Englishmen were wont to excel, as need may often be in fight to tugg or grapple, and to close

close. And this perhaps will be enough, wherein to prove and heat their single strength. The interim of unsweating themselves regularly; and convenient rest before meat, may both with profit and delight be taken up in retreating and composing their travail'd spirits with the solemn and divine harmonies of musick heard or learnt; either while the skilful organist plies his grave and fancied descant, in lofty fugues, or the whole symphony with artful and unimaginable touches adorn and grace the well-studied chords of some choice composer; sometimes the lute, or soft organ-stop waiting on elegant voices either to religious, material, or civil ditties; which, if wise men and prophets be not extremely out, have a great power over dispositions and manners, to smooth and make them gentle from rustick harshness and distemper'd passions. The like also would not be unexpedient after meat to assist and cherish nature in her first concoction, and send their minds back to study in good tune and satisfaction. Where having follow'd it close under vigilant eyes till about two hours before supper, they are by sudden alarm or watch-word, to be call'd out to their military motions, under sky or covert, according to the season, as was the Roman wont; first on foot, then as their age permits on horseback, to all the art of cavalry; that having in sport but with much exactness, and daily muster, serv'd out the rudiments of their soldiership in all the skill of embattelling, marching, encamping, fortifying, besieging and battering, with all the helps of antient and modern stratagems. Tacticks, and warlike maxims, they may as it were out of a long war come forth renown'd and perfect commanders in the service of their country. They would not then, if they were trusted with fair and hopeful armies, suffer them for want of just and wise discipline, to shed away from about them like sick feathers, though they be never so oft supply'd: they would not suffer

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rein to their empty and unrecruitible colonels of twenty
 interim men in a company, to quaff out, or convey into
 venient secret hoards, the wages of a delusive list and a
 delight miserable remnant: yet in the mean while to be
 their tra- over-master'd with a score or two of drunkards,
 monies the only soldiery left about them, or else to com-
 skilful ly with all rapines and violences. No certainly,
 in lofty if they knew ought of that knowledge that be-
 ful and longs to good men or good governors, they would
 -studied not suffer these things. But to return to our own
 he lute, institute, besides these constant exercises at home;
 ither to there is another opportunity of gaining experience
 if wife to be won from pleasure itself abroad. In those
 have a vernal seasons of the year, when the air is calm
 smooth and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness
 ews and against nature not to go out, and see her riches,
 not be and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and
 nature in earth. I should not therefore be a persuader to
 back to them of studying much then, after two or three
 e having years that they have well laid their grounds, but
 out two to ride out in companies with prudent and staid
 alarm or guides, to all the quarters of the land; learning
 tary mo- and observing all places of strength, all commo-
 e season, dities of building and of soil, for towns and til-
 then as age, harbours and ports for trade: sometimes taking
 art of ca- sea as far as to our navy, to learn there also
 h exact- what they can in the practical knowledge of sail-
 iments of ing and of sea-fight. These ways would try all
 battelling, their peculiar gifts of nature; and if there were
 ging and any secret excellence among them, would fetch it
 d modern out, and give it fair opportunities to advance itself
 ims, they by, which could not but mightily redound to the
 forth re- good of this nation, and bring into fashion again
 service of those old admired virtues and excellencies, with far
 they were more advantage now in this purity of christian
 suffer them knowledge. Nor shall we then need the Monsieurs
 shed away of Paris to take our hopeful youth into their slight
 ough they and prodigal custodies, and send them over back
 not suffer again transform'd into mimicks, apes, and kick-
 their shaws

shows. But if they desire to see other countries at three or four and twenty years of age, not to learn principles, but to enlarge experience and make wide observation, they will by that time be such as shall deserve the regard and honour of all men when they pass, and the society and friendship of those in all places who are best and most eminent: and perhaps then other nations will be glad to visit us for their breeding, or else to imitate us in their own country.

Now lastly for their diet there cannot be much to say, save only that it would be best in the same house; for much time else would be lost abroad, and many ill habits got; and that it should be plain, healthful, and moderate, I suppose is out of controversy. Thus, Mr. Hartlib, you have a general view in writing, as your desire was, of that which at several times I had discours'd with you concerning the best and noblest way of education; not beginning as some have done from the cradle, which yet might be worth many considerations, if brevity had not been my scope: many other circumstances also I could have mention'd, but this, to such as have the worth in them to make trial, for light and direction may be enough. Only I believe, that this is not a bow for every man to shoot in that counts himself a teacher; but will require sinews almost equal to those which Homer gave Ulysses; yet I am withal persuaded that it may prove much more easy in the essay, than it now seems at a distance, and much more illustrious; howbeit not more difficult than I imagine, and that imagination presents me with nothing but very happy and very possible, according to best wishes; if God have so decreed, and this age have spirit and capacity enough to apprehend.

THE END.